

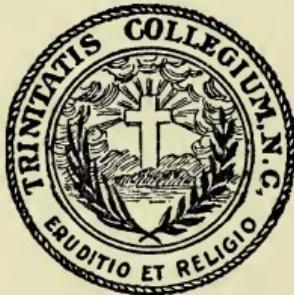
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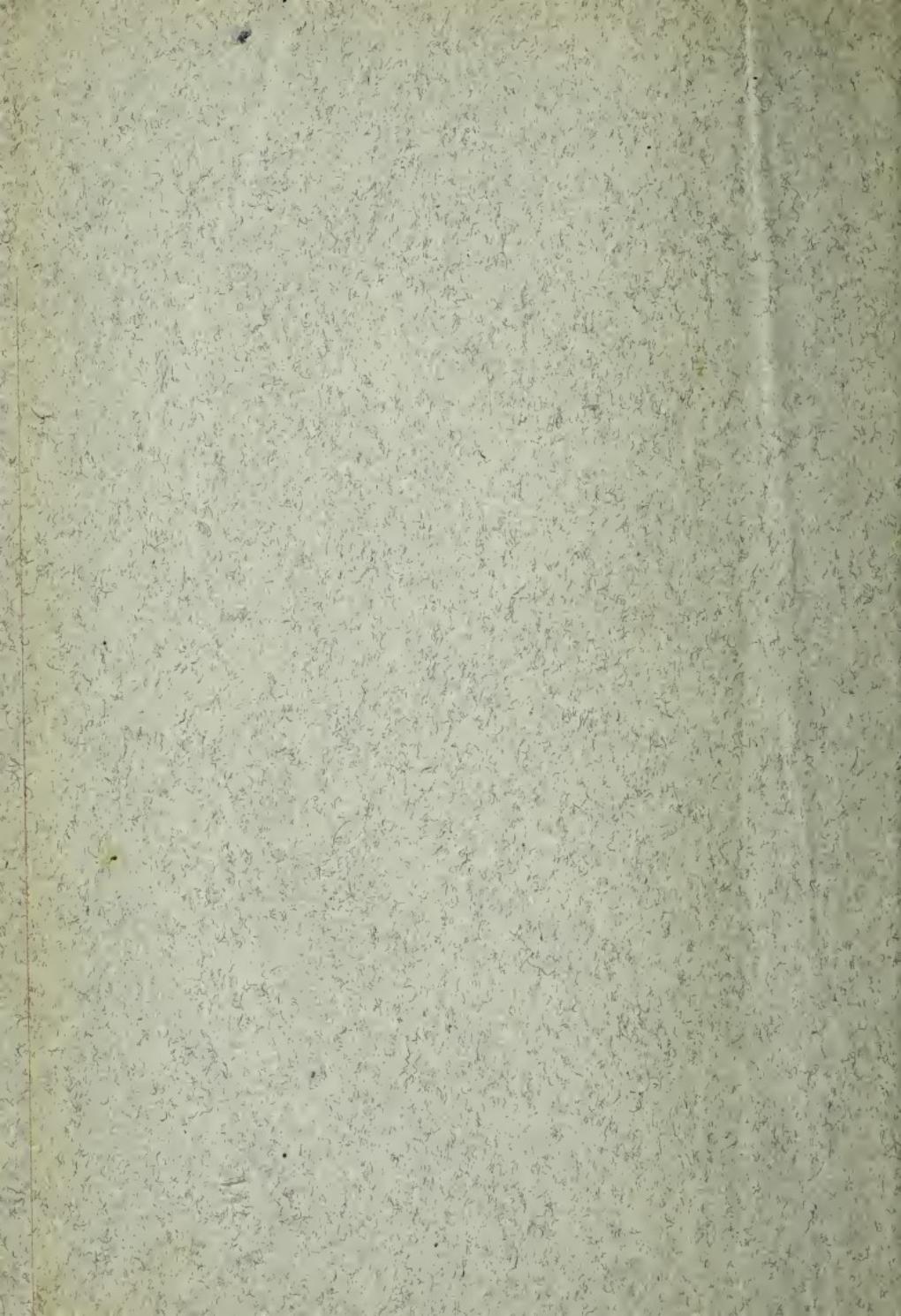
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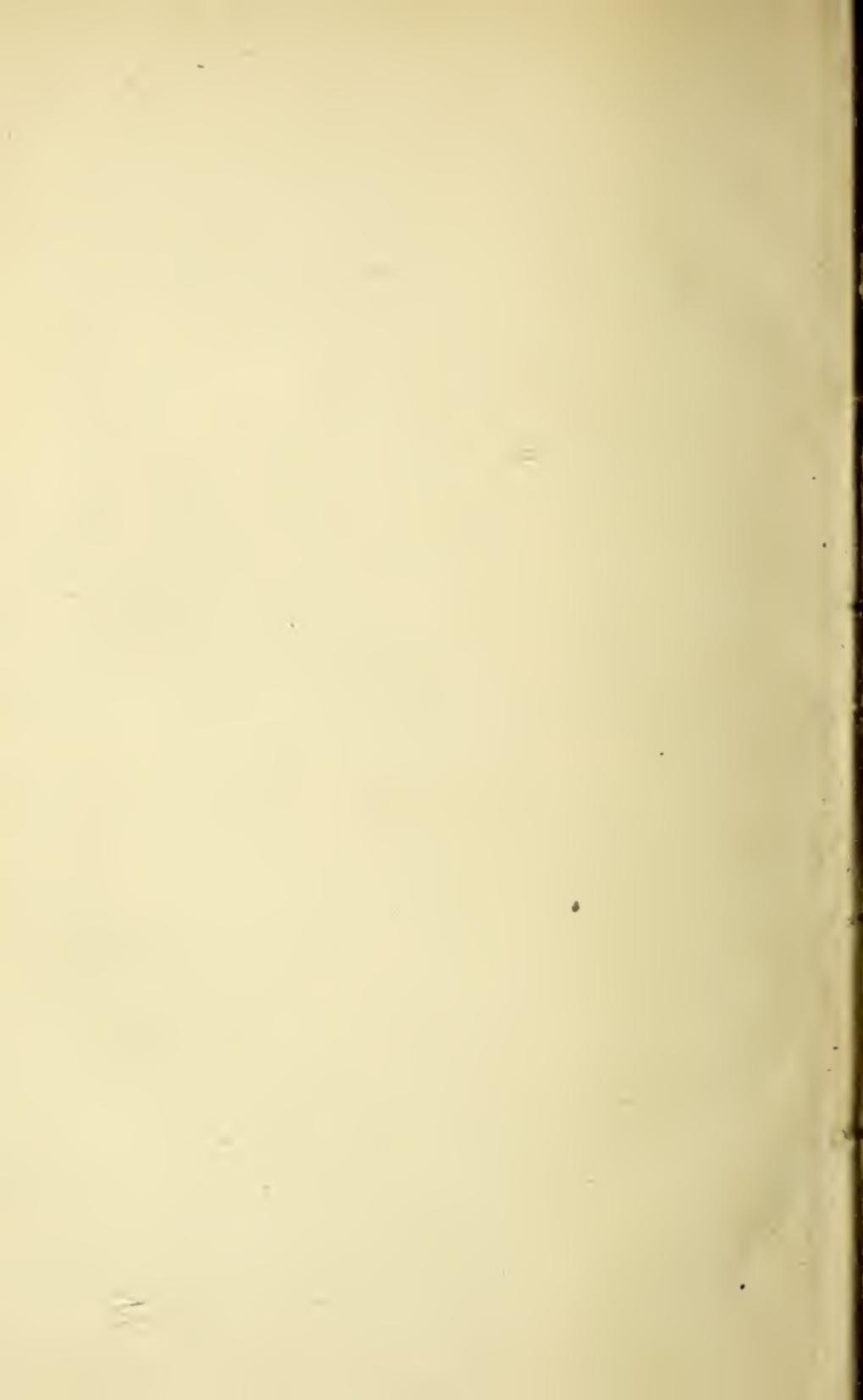
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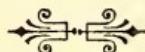




THE RECREATIONS

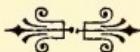
OF A

PRESIDING ELDER.



BY THE REV. PAUL WHITEHEAD, D.D.,

Of the Virginia Conference, M. E. Church, South.



NASHVILLE, TENN.:

SOUTHERN METHODIST PUBLISHING HOUSE.

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PREFACE.

THESE papers were originally contributed to the *Richmond Christian Advocate*. I have ventured to add to the series which appeared in that journal some articles which were written as editorials in the same paper, when the writer happened to be editor *pro tem.* The circumstances of their original appearance will explain local allusions in the articles. They are collected in book form with the hope that they may be worthy of being added to the list of volumes issuing from the Publishing House which combine entertainment and instruction. P. W.

RICHMOND, VA., April, 1885.

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CONTENTS.

No.	—	PAGE
1. Introductory		7
2. A Rainy Day		12
3. An Evening's Music		16
4. The Old Preacher		21
5. The Layman of To-day		26
6. Earth-worms		31
7. Deep-sea Fishes		40
8. Two Deaths		51
9. The General Conference of 1882.....		56
10. The Thomasites		63
11. Country Church-yards.....		70
12. The Quarter Stretch.....		77
13. Unconscious Selfishness		87
14. Doers of the Word		95
15. The Tunnel of Death.....		99
16. Starting the Machine		103
17. The Itinerant's Sacrifice.....		108
18. The Itinerant's Wife.....		115
19. The Old North State.....		121
20. Gloomy Weather.....		127
21. Systematic Men		132
22. Machinery in the Church.....		137
23. Music in Olden Days.....		144

No.	PAGE
24. Protracted Meetings	149
25. The Death of the Old	155
26. The Red Sunsets	162
27. "Custer's Last Charge"	167
28. Ice-making	173
29. Sorrowful Holidays	180
30. A Future State.....	186
31. Hollywood Cemetery	191
32. Monuments in Hollywood	196
33. Monuments in Hollywood (<i>continued</i>)	205
34. An Elocutionary Pulpit.....	215

RECREATIONS OF A PRESIDING ELDER.

No. 1.

INTRODUCTORY.

AND why not? Why should not a presiding elder have recreations? No man has a more relentless and vacationless routine. He is expected to have no "hot terms" or winter freezings up. He is not expected to send anybody else in his place, unless he be sick or holding a quarterly-meeting somewhere else. Naturally he is to be always well and never absent. He is not expected to dedicate churches, or marry rich people at a distance, or preach commencement sermons, or take excursions. Why should not presiding elders have recreations, if they can manage it? And perhaps they do have them. If "that which cometh on [them] daily, the care of all the churches," will allow, somewhere in the middle of the week they may find time.

The present writer is thinking of taking a thought or so "on the wing," as it were, and

bagging it for the benefit of your readers, Mr. ADVOCATE; and while thus diversifying his employment of time, he may recreate his flagging energies, and it may be do good by a shot from a bow drawn “at a venture.” He “minds” him—as the Scotch say—of the “Recreations of a Country Parson.” If he might only find the pen of so ready a writer, he might turn hours of recreation or enforced cessation of work to good account, and say many things pleasantly, if not wisely, in the course of the four quarters. Boyd, the “Country Parson,” wrote one of his articles on the paper held on the flat part of his horse’s forehead between and above the eyes, as he petted the family nag in the stable, with the manger for a seat and the stable surroundings for inspiration. (I see a stable now and then in my rounds where I couldn’t have stood, sat, or been inspired!) That was an odd conceit; but I might seek a table almost as queer. The pine-leaves spread as a carpet in these woods may do; or that stump, more level than its fellows; or yonder fence-rail, broad and smooth; a big chip in the oak woods of home, or a rock in the glens lined

with the ferns and wild ginger, loved from boyhood.

On some such basis I can scribble what passes through "the musing mind," at times that call for no professional labor. And thinking of whither it is to go when scribbled sets me to musing for the thousandth time about the press and its incessant issues. Everywhere we meet them: the newsboy on the train, the black venders of newspapers about the depots, the counters of bookstores and news-shops, the circulars and "specimen-pages," with which every man is deluged whose name is unfortunate enough to have been printed in any wise. Books, pamphlets, papers, broadsides, plain and illustrated—the land is flooded! For good or evil, with light or darkness; upon minds of all sorts, from the negro spelling along the road to knowledge to the scholar in his library. Who can trace the effects or calculate the power of all this?

We must do our best to make our Methodist press powerful for good this year. It has already carried blessings to thousands; let us try to get it into every crevice and corner. The "Old Richmond," with its edito-

rials and other matter for grown folks, and “Uncle Larry’s” column for the little ones—may its pleasant face shine in many a new spot, and brighten and benefit many a household hitherto unblessed!

The paucity of reading families among our people oppresses me. It is not poverty—the poorest often read most. Mr. Wesley’s collier converts were poorer than our late slaves, but they read. It is ignorance, it is intellectual stupidity, it is the rust and canker of worldliness; minds are sometimes quick, and even preternaturally sharp, but it is in the direction of money-getting, and not in that of wisdom-getting—celestial wisdom—“the principal thing.”

There are cheerful spots and signs. The Sunday-schools; a family with tables that have books, some new and showing use; the thoughtful eye opened upon you as you stand up to preach (what man of God cannot discern them among his hearers?); the children attending good schools (though too many of them contract no taste for literature); the conversation now and then breaking away from business, weather, and crops, and neigh-

borhood gossip—these are hopeful things. But O the leaden pall of ignorance and prejudice, unlifted by any taste for books or papers, or sign of any such taste beginning, that lies upon the masses! And while it lies there what hope of doing much good to such people by sermons and conversations? When reading and thinking people lose so much of a sermon, what hope that these will carry away a solitary grain of rightly-divided truth? They will have gone to church and gone home, and that will be nearly all.

Let the preachers in the Church Conferences press inquiry third: “Is our religious literature circulated and read?” and speak words “in season” in private; and let our intelligent people second the movement.

No. 2.

A RAINY DAY.



RAINY Saturday—chill, gloomy, with a steady down-pour! No hope of service or even of Quarterly Conference to-day! Thank God, it is not Sunday! Some cheer in that view. As the man of God who had alternately the gout and the stone, when he had one thanked God that it was not the other, so when some weeks ago the snow shut out a Sabbath service, I could bless God that Saturday had been tolerably fair, and that Quarterly Conference had been held with respectable numbers. And, as it has often happened, to-morrow may be as bright as May.

How nice to be able, housed and disabled from active movements, to spend the dreary day in pleasant converse with a clever book! Blessings on the great printing art, which robs long nights in winter of their dullness, and makes civilization and refinement come in place of the barbarism which fought all

day with brutes or savages, gorged itself with meat and drink at sunset, and then slept off the debauch! Reading and pleasant friends can make agreeable even a rainy Saturday.

What a grand agency of Providence this “weather bureau” is!

The thirsty ground has been drinking at a great rate for many weeks, what it so much longed for last summer, and for lack of which it nearly perished. Much of the soil will be fit emblem of an improving Christian. “For the earth that drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessings from God.” May it be so with my district! Lord of the harvest, send the spiritual showers! Where drought parched last year let times of refreshing come from the presence of the Lord this year! There come back to me remembrances of some “years of the right-hand of the Most High” in my earlier religious days. One was in a place seemingly barren; but in answer to the prayers of some faithful souls in all the churches, there came such a shower of Divine influence as it will be impossible for any

who felt it to forget. Glorious fruit of it remains to this day; and some of it, if we gather up all the good resulting and connected, "shakes like Lebanon." That and another great outpouring of the Spirit I remember, near the same date, were in May.

There is no reason why "revivals" should be "confined," as a veteran presiding elder said, "to fodder-pulling time." I have rather lost faith in the efficacy of set protracted-meetings regularly held summer after summer at each church. They come to be regarded as a matter of course, and also by many as a neighborhood frolic or diversion. On the whole, they produce less and less in number, quality, and stability of converts. The meetings that come down instead of being got up, that force themselves upon preachers, keep the ark afloat. Arranged not after man's plans or man's wisdom, and especially with no particular regard to man's worldly convenience, they break over the barriers of formalism and worldliness, and sweep all before them. I trust all our preachers labor for immediate results, summer and winter, to make a saving impression then and there in every ser-

mon. Let them watch the signs and press the battle where the enemy's picket-line falls back.

For the same reason let us discourage all set evangelists of the trade-revivalist type. Doubtless many of them have done good in various places. Some of them have done no great harm anywhere, but the general effect of their position and assumed calling has been to depreciate the value of close, steady, painstaking, patient pastoral work, and to narrow and distort the souls of the men themselves. Even the Church itself cannot be in a continual excitement, and these men soon become of little account in any other circumstances. Years ago I read in Dr. Nicholas Murray's "Preachers and Preaching" some wholesome chapters on the subject, with piquant illustrations from actual life; and I in the main agree with him yet, notwithstanding the Earles, Howards, Harrisons, and In-skips. Of course no man need, because of such reasons, forbear sending for help to his brethren in pastoral and other work not too remote from him and his people.

No. 3.

AN EVENING'S MUSIC.

 HIS time it is recreation, sure enough. It is nearly eleven o'clock at night—a rainy night, with heavy showers and a gloomy world of darkness indeed to gaze upon when we go to the window; but within all is bright and comfortable. I have been sitting since about nine o'clock drinking in a marvelous draught of pleasure. Dr. Watts speaks of his soul sitting and singing

Herself away
To everlasting bliss.

I could not at any time, and least of all now, do much at singing; but I think just at present I could magnify the office of sitting; and if innocent earthly bliss—sweet prelude of the “everlasting bliss”—comes ever to me, it comes in the guise which it takes to-night. A dear friend, a pianist of rare ability, has been dispensing the riches of his *repertoire* with a power and expression seldom heard anywhere. The exquisite touch, the rare

conception of the composer's very inward thoughts, and the perfect command of all the *technique* of the piano, are on hand to-night in unusual excellence even for him; and the noble instrument sighs and breaks its heart with Chopin, thunders majestically with Robert Schumann, or sounds all depths and utters unspeakable things with the great Beethoven. If Sancho Panza was right in invoking blessings upon "the man that invented sleep," what inestimable good ought to be wished for the man that invented music —for that rare old Jubal, "the father of all such as handle the harp and organ," or some other remote ancestor who first adventured upon the art that "brought an angel down" to earth! I am his debtor largely. Other descendants of his, tuneless and insensible to the "concord of sweet sounds," may feel under no special obligations to him; but I can set up a stone at point after point all through the length of memory's exercise, and thank God for great enjoyment—pure pleasures, fleeting and ethereal, but prophetic of the world where all things are perfect and eternal! I am not one of those who think

music is religious intrinsically. Least of all do I dream that the greatest musical knowledge and ability have any power to work a change of heart. One of the greatest living musicians, not long ago visiting this country, is an incorrigible and desperate gamester; and another, immoral and infidel, takes up and puts down wives with Mormon-like facility. But I do wonder that any thing "un-holy and unclean" can live in the presence of this glorious art. The strains that the mighty masters have composed and the skillful performer knows how to render, seem oftentimes to be fragments of the songs of angels that have fallen down upon us through some rift in the skies. I heard once, played by an orchestra of one hundred skilled players, a slow movement of a symphony which was unearthly in its sweetness and purity. It lingers in my impressions as matchless and unapproachable. I can recall nothing of it distinctly, but my heart hardly beat while I listened; and after years gone by it still reigns in my soul, *facile princeps* of all music I ever heard.

You see my district has a musical point in

it. There I will be able sometimes to refresh myself and comfort myself after the torture I shall suffer from barbarous doings in sacred music; for I shall certainly be put upon that rack occasionally. I affect no taste for great precision and excellence in that respect; I can hear and enjoy simple, unpretentious hymns and sacred melodies. By virtue of their own sweetness and by association, many of them are precious to me; I love many old tunes—some of them unwritten, so far as I know—that have embodied the pious aspirations and emotions of good, plain men and women innocent of musical art, ignorant of Handel and Beethoven, and the “classic” music of any age; but the tune devoid of character, a lifeless seesaw; the man that sings like a stick or a piece of putty, with no expression, no idea of *tempo*, no soul in him; the woman who plays an organ *staccato*, or whoops with a constant and abominable exaggeration of the *portamento* (the gliding up to or down from a note which artists use occasionally), “my soul hateth!” From all such, “good Lord, deliver us!” Let that be an additional petition in the Litany.

Now and then I come upon spots where singing is “a lost art.” I suppose it was known in the days of the fathers, when most Methodists sung “with the spirit,” if not “with the understanding also.” But “a drought has since succeeded, and a sad decline we see.” The fathers that raised tunes, “where are they?” and the itinerant singing-masters, “do they live forever?” The young men and maidens are tuneless as the corn-stalks. You can sing solo in those regions, “no man forbidding.” “The world of melody” is all your own. Be it so that your voice is like that of a bull-frog, you must croak, or worship God by other means than “the service of song.”

No. 4.

THE OLD PREACHER.



O-DAY I am spending some hours at the house of one of our older preachers, retired from the active work. Bereaved of the dear companion of his youthful, "brighter years, and with the time of the "sear, the yellow leaf" fallen upon him, he is nevertheless cheerful, hospitable, reading and taking active interest in the Church and its affairs. He is full of reminiscence and instructive anecdote, taking no gloomy, doleful view of his age and surroundings.

How refreshing! For I have known old preachers who were querulous and grumbling, sardonic and bitter, sour in spirit, and continually asking, "Why were the former days better than these days?"

It is a sad sight to see a man once eloquent and energetic, moving and charming thousands in the great congregation, now shattered by disease and bowed down by the weight of years; but it is far sadder to see

him also invaded by the acidities and petty carpings of an unhappy old age. Our last years should surely be our best; and it is well if they be pervaded by a sunny religion which sparkles and flashes and casts its heavenly radiance over gray hairs and dismantled homes.

I am concerned about the future in this life of many of the oldest members of our Conference. Some of them have been unfortunate, some improvident and bad managers; some have felt the hand of affliction heavily laid upon them; some of them have "no certain dwelling-place," and yet cannot "take their turn," perform their labor, and be provided for with their active brethren. Our Conference collection aids them, the "Relief" Society fund grows slowly, and comes forward in a pinch; but the prospect is more or less cheerless with many. O that it were in the heart of some of our rich members, who have made their hundreds of thousands in trade or speculation—perhaps this very year—to found a noble charity that would provide for such! Mr. Corcoran's "Louise Home" for decayed gentlewomen is a charity at once beneficent and graceful.

They are simply distressed and impoverished people of refinement, formerly in wealth and comfort, whom he relieves. Nothing is due to them for any thing they have done save acknowledgment of the faithfulness with which they adorned their former station; yet he felt how excellent a thing it would be to smooth the path to the grave of such old gentlewomen.

But our old ministers, sick, worn out, and reduced, are men who once dispensed spiritual blessings to thousands, and as the agents of God's redeeming grace saved many from eternal death. The Church owes them shelter, sustenance, and relief from care. There ought to be a place provided, beautiful and comfortable—an earthly ante-chamber of heaven—in which these old soldiers of the cross could wait for the messenger bringing everlasting rest and glory.

But why suggest that rich men should do this? Cannot the multitude of men of little means, who yet have something to give, and above all, generous hearts, unite in its accomplishment? Perhaps they might, but upon them is being thrown every burden.

They it is, not the rich, who furnish the regular support of the ministry; who keep up our regular collections, who relieve the bulk of the poor, and sustain our religious newspapers and publishing interests. If our colleges are ever endowed they will probably have to do it by slow and steady giving, for it is plain to my mind that the rich are not going to do it. Men who put \$50,000 in a house, and spend thousands upon luxurious furniture and living—whose annual outlay in their families is twenty or thirty times the living of many generous and self-sacrificing plain men—think they have done great things in donating five or six thousand to a college. Occasionally one gives an organ or a steeple, or a ten-thousand-dollar church, and thinks he has exhausted Christian benevolence for the rest of his life; or, if a twinge of conscience take him in “a cold snap,” consoles himself by spending a few hundreds upon the freezing poor. Our D’Arey Pauls have no successors yet. The really rich dare not apply to their income a scale of giving like his. To think of doing so would frighten them out of a week’s sleep!

Meantime, while this provision for the aged and worn-out remains unconstructed, I am daily admiring the courage and devotion and self-sacrifice of the average preacher. Men who have the gifts and energy and education to have made abundance, if not riches, in any ordinary business, are living on salaries of from \$500 to \$850, and "managing somehow" to clothe and feed their families—often large ones—and educate the boys and girls. For Christ's sake, for the glory of his name and the advancement of his cause, they "gladly wander up and down, and smile at toil and pain." Surely the days of heroism are not past!

And I am not reproaching our people. They do better for their preachers, as a whole, than others do for theirs. If their ministerial lottery has no prizes, it has few or no blanks

No. 5.

THE LAYMAN OF TO-DAY.



F my journeyings bring to my knowledge the heroism and devotion of the average preacher, they do not the less reveal the worth and piety and fidelity of the average layman.

In our Church, in town and country, he belongs to the middle class—a denomination not at all answering to what is so called in England, where it means, almost always, a shop-keeper of some sort; and still less answering to the shop class in Germany and Continental Europe generally, where the word they use implies a doubtful honesty as well as lack of refinement; but corresponding to the yeomen of “Merry England” and the burgher of the Middle Ages—the class in which liberty has always flourished.

If he be a farmer, he is of the independent kind who are ready to reply to offers of place and promotion, “I dwell among mine own people;” if a merchant or mechanic, he is of the thriftier class, who do honest work,

and manage to get paid for it. No serf or bondsman, he owns his land; and in his home, more or less comfortable, shelters the nestlings of his heart. In trade he is no restless speculator dreaming of wealth well-nigh gambled for, driving every thing with headlong speed and godless absorption, but a steady man of business, undertaking things in a square and natural way; in no fever of hurry, and yet "not slothful in business."

Ofttimes he is a "Johnny Reb." Perhaps in the bloom of youth he followed the flag of the "Lost Cause," and mostly as a "high private," but sometimes with rank still recognized in his present title, came out of bloody war's alarms. Oftener than otherwise he bears upon his person in more places than one the certificate of his bravery; and generally in his quiet but determined look, in his modest yet gallant bearing, his candid, straightforward talk, you discern the signs of a man who did not linger behind when a charge was ordered, or in the hour of peril skulk behind some base subterfuge.

In not a few instances he came out of the war to confront utter poverty; but he took

hold in good fashion, wasted no time in vain regrets, sold none of the “grit” in him for “a mess of pottage” mixed with political dirt, and has progressed surprisingly. The inherent recuperative powers of such a man have been displayed. In many cases he is “well to do” in every respect; in no case does he eat “the bread of idleness,” but breasts the waves of adverse fortune with a cheerful courage.

By such men the prostrate work of our Church has been set upon its legs; churches burned or pulled down in war, or decayed and forsaken, have been rehabilitated or rebuilt; the preacher finds “homes” unknown to the old *ante bellum* itinerant; Sunday-schools and other evangelical agencies “blossom as the rose.” These men make our “New Virginia,” in the Methodist sense. The armed heel of Mars trampled the life out of the Old Virginia in many places, but the new crop is in full vigor.

Our average layman is a capital listener to the gospel; he is hardly ever a sleepy-head. Generally he has the *Advocate* in his house; where he has it not he is an inferior specimen of his order. Purity, true politeness—unaf-

fected and unrestrained; genuine hospitality—free and overflowing, reign in his household. The children are good, affectionate, frequently very bright boys and girls; they know how to work, and are not ashamed to do it; they go to school too, and Venable's Arithmetic and Gildersleeve's or Bingham's Latin books are there on the table, bound with that leather strap.

There are not many doctors, lawyers, judges, and great landed proprietors of the old wealthy class, in our communion. Being in Georgia some years ago, I was amazed to meet frequently judges who were Methodists. Such do not commonly grow up here. The lawyers, as a class, are Presbyterians or Episcopilians. We have a moderate share of the sons of Esculapius—the mass of that profession, alas! know little of the “Physician of souls.”

But we have a powerful body in the community in our yeomanry. As I looked at Brother Crooks' projected “Map of the Conference,” and saw the thickly-strewn churches of our denomination planted in every neighborhood, I said to myself—thinking of

the day when Methodism met in Conference at “Ellis’s” and “Lane’s,” in Revolutionary Virginia—“What hath God wrought!”

Behold the building material, the “living stones” of our house! It is “a holy temple unto the Lord,” not to be despised. We expect to make it far lovelier, more polished, more beautiful, more spacious. Meanwhile we “thank God, and take courage.” We are in no danger of disintegration or extinction; we trust that our ministry and membership carry “the life of God” with them; we will get rid of the things that “offend.” “Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away.” But all over the land we see these healthful trees of the planting of the Most High. The great Husbandman will “prune” them “that they may bear more fruit.”

No. 6.

EARTH-WORMS.



OR pleasant and profitable occupation of many of my hours in travel and waiting, on rainy days and in accidental leisure, I have been indebted to the English *Quarterly Reviews*—favorites from boyhood. I always find a few articles in each that are worth the price of the *Reviews* for a year. Occasionally one will do a man's reading for him on a special subject, gleaned from the grain of many elaborate works, putting in short compass information from many sources ordinarily inaccessible to the common reader. They are suggestive, stimulating to independent thought in a high degree, and furnish in the course of a year many valuable illustrations to a preacher.

This week they have interested me in some departments of natural history, into which I am disposed to ask the readers of the *Advocate* to follow me a little way.

In the January number of the old *London Quarterly*—founded by Gifford seventy-six

years ago—there is a review of the remarkable work of Mr. Charles Darwin on “Earth worms.” The veteran naturalist, at over seventy years of age, gives his latest publication to this subject—the result of long-continued and sharp observations made by himself and sons.

Few of us who have been concerned with earth-worms chiefly as bait for fishing when we were boys, or as food for young birds, as we have on a damp morning in spring watched the robins and sparrows pulling them out of the ground, have imagined that they were playing an important part in nature’s economy; but it would seem that He who chooses the base things of the world to confound the mighty has assigned a grand task to these obscure and lowly organized creatures. They are the little plowers of the earth, engaged in the production of that vegetable mold which constitutes the cultivable land of the entire earth. Thoroughly breaking up the upper layers (their burrows being three and four, and sometimes seven or eight feet deep), undermining and sinking pebbles and other objects lying upon the

surface; eating, digesting, and voiding decayed vegetable matter, they bring to the top of the ground a finely-ground earthy matter which is gradually distributed by various agencies over the whole face of the ground.

Nothing can exceed the regularity of their industry. Ants and bees, heretofore regarded as monopolists of that high virtue, must stand aside in comparison. Nothing but the coral insect, that magnificent architect of the tropical seas, can be mentioned in respect of the extent and solidity of work; and he, like many showy workers, does great things in a region where they are out of the reach of the great mass of mankind, and which serve rather as curiosities than as useful products.

I give some extracts from this paper, as the subject will be new, and I think interesting, to many readers of the *Advocate*.

As to the amount of work done by the worms, "Mr. Darwin quotes a German authority for an estimate that 53,767 worms exist in an acre of land; but this estimate was founded on the number found in gardens, and the same authority believes that about

half as many live in corn-fields. In short, there seems good evidence that on each acre of land adapted to the work of worms a weight of more than ten tons of earth annually passes through their bodies, and is brought to the surface. In England and Scotland the land which is cultivated and is well fitted for these animals has been estimated at 32,000,000 acres. The astonishing but inevitable conclusion is, that in Great Britain alone no less an amount of earth than 320,000,000 tons is annually brought by worms from underground to the surface of the earth. Well may Mr. Darwin lay stress on such an illustration of the enormous effects which may be produced by continually recurrent causes, however small."

Some interesting observations are narrated by Mr. Darwin of their labors in carrying underneath to the depth of two and a half or three inches in thirty years all the stones of a field, some of them half as large as a child's head.

Read the following to learn that there is vastly more in an earth-worm than is "dreamt of in your philosophy." These are revela-

tions partly due to the microscope: "The structure of these obscure creatures is far more complicated than would be supposed by any one but a naturalist. The body of a large worm consists, we are told, of from one hundred to two hundred almost cylindrical rings or segments, each furnished with minute bristles, and the muscular system is well developed. The mouth, which is at one end of the body, has a little lip for prehension. Behind it is a pharynx, which can be pushed forward at pleasure, and which worms expand for the purpose of enlarging their holes as they burrow into the ground. Behind this is a long esophagus, in which there are three pairs of large glands, which Mr. Darwin says are 'highly remarkable, for nothing like them is known in any other animal.' They secrete a surprising amount of carbonate of lime, and although their use is not certain, 'it is probable that they primarily serve as organs of excretion, and secondarily as an aid to digestion.' Worms consume many fallen leaves, and these have been sometimes known to contain as much as seventy-two per cent. of lime. Unless, therefore, there were some means for

excreting this, earth-worms would be liable to become overcharged with it. Accordingly large concretions of carbonate of lime are found in these glands, so large that ‘how they escape from the gland is a marvel;’ but that they do escape is certain, for they are often found in the gizzard, and intestines, and in the castings of worms. . . . The esophagus ends in a crop, and behind this is a gizzard, in which grains of sand and small stones may generally be found; and it is probable that these serve like mill-stones to triturate the food. The gizzard leads to the intestine, which runs in a straight course to the posterior end of the body, and this intestine again presents a remarkable structure. The circulatory system and the nervous system are both fairly well developed. Worms possess no respiratory organs, but breathe by their skin. They are destitute of eyes, but are not insensible to light, which affects them partly by its intensity and partly by its duration; and when a certain blaze of light is directed upon a worm it will sometimes dart like a rabbit into its burrow. They are thus enabled to distinguish between day and night,

so as to escape danger from the many animals which would prey upon them by day. They possess no sense of hearing; and when placed on a table close to the keys of a piano, which was played as loudly as possible, they remained perfectly quiet. . . . Indeed, of all their senses, that of touch seems the most highly developed. . . . Their sense of smell is feeble, but they seem to be able to discover by means of it strong-smelling food, of which they are fond, such as onions and decayed cabbage-leaves. In respect of food, however, they are omnivorous. Their importance in the economy of nature depends mainly upon the fact that they swallow an extraordinary quantity of earth, extracting from it any digestible matter which it may contain. They also consume a large quantity of half-decayed leaves of all kinds, and fresh leaves also. They will eat sugar and liquorice, dry starch, raw and roasted meats, and above all *raw fat*. They are, moreover, cannibals, for Mr. Darwin found that two halves of a dead worm placed in their pots were dragged into their burrows and gnawed."

The reviewer is no disciple of Darwin in

the doctrine of Evolution. Giving all praise to the great naturalist for his masterly qualities and attainments as a scientific man, he refuses to admit the truth of the speculative views suggested by Mr. Darwin's imagination. He says: "We still remain convinced of the prematurity, to say no more, of what is commonly, whether with strict justice or not, styled the Darwinian theory of Evolution." And at the close of his article he turns Darwin's own guns against him in clever style, as follows:

"We cannot but conclude with one suggestion, which seems naturally to arise out of such a wonderful narrative. Is the accomplishment of such enormous results by an agency so insignificant, but at the same time so exactly adapted to the work to be done, explicable on any other supposition than that of positive design? It is observable that in this book we do not find any suggestion of the influences by which so singular an agency can have been evolved by natural selection. These infinitely numerous little plows seem to be expressly provided to prepare the earth for the sustentation of

plants and of other animal life, and for no other purpose whatever. We can remember no more vivid illustration of the old argument which infers from the perfect adaptation of means to ends the action throughout nature of a Divine wisdom and will."

That "old argument" is as strong as ever. In fact, the more observations "in heaven and earth" are collected by naturalists and scientists of the infidel school, the better for the theistic doctrine. These men "build better than they know." Their works of careful study and patient observation will be material for illustrations of the Divine wisdom and goodness which will be ever fresh.

No. 7.

DEEP-SEA FISHES.



AM done with earth-worms, but not with natural history.

“The earth is full of thy riches,” says the psalmist; but he adds, “So also is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.” I am (thanks to the *Quarterly*) going to reveal to my readers some of these marine wonders.

I have always been fond of fishing and fishes. Many a pleasant hour of recreation have I had in that way. In the vast, lonely, wild mountains, along the banks lined with kalmia and rhododendron (“ivy” and “laurel”), among rocks of fantastic shapes and huge proportions, covered with moss and ferns of such greenness and loveliness as are unknown in other more accessible places, here and there coming on a wild flower of some unusual species, I have fished for the brook trout in pools of surpassing brightness and beauty, glassy and cool, of crystal-like

clearness and purity. Or, in boats dug out of the bulky cypress log, I have glided over the somewhat darkened but still polished waters of a mill-pond in the lowlands, and anchored to a submerged stump or fallen trunk of a tree, have drawn out perch, pike, and green bass ("chub") from the teeming waters. If quantity and activity of biting be on the side of the deep lowland waters, ornamented with the pond-lily and shaded by the graceful cypress, the crystal sheen of the waters, the brilliant colors and shyness of the fish, the wild beauty and magnificence of the scenery, and above all the purity of the air and the delightfulness of the temperature, are on the side of the "everlasting hills" and the "springs" which "run among" them. No deadly "chill" lurks in their glorious glens; the thirsty fisher can kneel down and "drink out of the branch" as of a fountain of nectar; and he will see only one rattlesnake now and then, for a hundred water-moccasons in the low country. Nevertheless, each region has its peculiar charms and attractions, and I have responded in both to the Peter-like remark,

“I go a-fishing,” with a cheerful “I also go with thee.”

But I have never fished in the sea. That is an enjoyment yet to come. Of “hand-lines” I know nothing, and have never caught drum or sheep’s-head or blue-fish. Many of the “riches” of the Lord in “this great and wide sea” I have seen; but neither I nor most of my readers, I suppose, have before heard of what I am going to glean from the *Quarterly’s* pages.

The late Commodore Maury devotes a part of his work on the “Physical Geography of the Sea” to the great “telegraphic plateau” which he first pointed out as stretching along the bottom of the ocean from Newfoundland to Ireland at a great depth, but not too deep to admit the laying of a cable upon it. Besides the excellence of its freedom from agitation, he recommended it as free from both vegetable and animal life. Nothing would be down there, neither “small [nor] great beasts” to disturb or root up the cable. “We have now,” said he, “had specimens from the bottom of ‘blue water’ in the narrow Coral Sea, the broad Pacific, and the long

Atlantic, and they all tell the same story, namely, that the bed of the ocean is a vast cemetery." And again: "Where there is a nursery, hard by there will be found also a grave-yard—such is the condition of the animal world. But it never occurred to us before to consider the surface of the sea as one wide nursery, its every ripple as a cradle, and its bottom one vast burial-place."

But this has proved to be probably a mistake. Whatever may be true of the actual bottom, later investigations have revealed that the deep sea, at from five hundred to eight hundred fathoms (3,000 to 4,800 feet—nearly a mile!) of perpendicular depths, where all faint reflection of sunlight is unknown, where the constant temperature is about thirty-six (only four above freezing) degrees, where vegetation is impossible, is inhabited, the world over, by a numerous family of fishes.

An article on "Fishes and Their Habits" gives highly interesting information concerning these wonders of the deep. Besides the absence of the sunlight and the low temperature, another circumstance, supposed to be fatal to any living creature at such depths,

was the increased pressure by the water. "The pressure of the atmosphere on the level of the sea amounts to fifteen pounds per square inch of the surface of the body of an animal, but the pressure amounts to a ton weight for every one thousand fathoms of depth." Curiously enough this was one of the very circumstances which led to the discovery of the existence of these fishes. Hear Dr. Günther, keeper of the Zoölogical Department in the British Museum:

"The knowledge of the existence of deep-sea fishes is one of the recent discoveries of ichthyology. It is only about twenty years ago that, from the evidence afforded by the anatomical structure of a few singular fishes obtained in the North Atlantic, an opinion was expressed that these fishes inhabited great depths of the ocean, and that their organization was specially adapted for living under the physical abyssal conditions. These fishes agreed in the character of their connective tissue, which was so extremely weak as to yield to, and to break under, the slightest pressure, so that the greatest difficulty is experienced in preserving their

body in its continuity. Another singular circumstance was that some of the specimens were picked up floating on the surface of the water, having met their death whilst engaged in swallowing or digesting another fish not much inferior or even superior in size to themselves. The first peculiarity was accounted for by the fact that if these fishes really inhabited the great depths supposed, their removal from the enormous pressure under which they lived would be accompanied by such an expansion of the gases within their tissues as to rupture them and to cause a separation of the parts which had been held together by the pressure. The second circumstance was explained thus: A raptatorial fish, organized to live at a depth of between five hundred and eight hundred fathoms, seizes another, usually inhabiting a depth of between three hundred and five hundred fathoms. In its struggles to escape, the fish seized—nearly as large or strong as the attacking fish—carries the latter out of its depth into a higher stratum, where the diminished pressure causes such an expansion of gases as to make the destroyer, with its victim, rise with increas-

·ing rapidity toward the surface, which they reach dead or in a dying condition."

Respecting the disorganization of their bodily tissues by the "expansion of the gases" within them, the reviewer says:

"Their bones and muscles are comparatively feebly developed; the former have a 'fibrous, fissured, and cavernous texture, are light, with scarcely any calcareous matter, so that the point of a needle will readily penetrate them without breaking.' They are loosely attached to each other—the vertebræ especially; and unless carefully handled, the body will almost fall to pieces. But that this is not the animal's normal condition we may be well assured. It is due simply to the absence of the pressure which keeps the whole organization compact; for, as has just been stated, most of these fishes are rapacious, and to indulge their voracity (enormous, as we shall presently see) they must execute rapid and powerful movements, to effect which their muscles must be as firm and their vertebræ as taughly braced as in their surface-swimming relatives."

It is stated that many of these fishes have

"more or less numerous round, shining, mother-of-pearl colored bodies imbedded in the skin;" "as 't were in scorn of eyes, reflecting gems."

The use of such organs is not known. They are present in those deep-sea fishes which have "well-developed and even large eyes perfectly adapted for seeing in the dark," and also absent in others which have no external eyes. They are therefore hardly "accessory eyes." They may be "producers of light"—phosphorescent or otherwise—"in which case it must proceed from the inner cavity, and be emitted through the lens-like body as through a 'bull's-eye' lantern."

They "display few colors [except one or two species], and gay tints would indeed be useless amid 'the gloom of Tartarus profound.' Their body is generally either black or silvery, but the silverness has a most brilliant sheen, which is preserved even after years of immersion in spirit. A few are 'picked out,' as a coach-painter might say, with bright scarlet, either on the fin-rays or the filaments attached thereto."

Of their voracity this well-nigh incredible

account is given: “Another remarkable property of some of these creatures—‘that woo the slimy bottom of the deep’—is a stomach so capable of distension that it can hold a prey of twice or thrice the bulk of the destroyer! Figures of two of these are given by Dr. Gunther. . . . Even with such a meal they are not always content, for though a fish seven inches and a half long was found in the latter specimen—itself not four inches in length—yet we are told it was tempted to take a bait.’ One of the earliest recorded instances of this voracity was observed by Mr. Johnson, who wrote as follows.of a specimen (of another and very rare species, however) he procured at Madeira, which had been found floating on the surface:

“The man from whom I obtained it stated that he had a fish with two heads, two mouths, four eyes, and a tail growing out of the middle of the back, which had astonished the whole market; and the fishermen one and all declared that they had never met with any thing like it before. At first sight it really did appear to be the monster described, but a short examination brought to light the fact

that one fish had been swallowed by another, and that the features of the former were seen through the thin, extensible skin of the latter. On extracting the fish that had been swallowed, it proved to have a diameter several times exceeding that of its enemy, whose stomach it had distended to an unnatural and painful degree.'"

This process of "swallowing" is precisely like that by which one snake swallows another as large as himself. I have seen a king-snake with the half-swallowed body of a moccasin in his jaws, which was both longer and larger than himself.

As the reviewer well remarks: "Even the unscientific imagination cannot fail to be aroused at the thought of the dark, cold, and still depths of the sea, lit up only here and there by the fitful gleams of their phosphorescent inhabitants, which must serve but to render the mysterious gloom more horrid—a gelid, watery Erebus, peopled by submarine furies as fierce as those that tenanted the subterranean realms of classic mythology. What a contrast to the poet's vision of ocean grottoes 'under the glassy, cool, translucent

wave,' haunted by graceful nereids 'sleeking their soft, alluring locks!'"'

I cannot occupy more of the *Advocate's* space, or I might tell of the "fighting-fish" of Siam, the "climbing perch" of the East Indies, and the group of Silurii from rivers of tropical America flowing into the Atlantic, which travel "during the dry season from a piece of water about to dry up, in quest of a pond of greater capacity," spending sometimes whole nights on dry land on the way.

But I am almost afraid to have said this much about them. Some of "Uncle Larry's" flock may have spontaneously exclaimed, "What a whopper!"

No. 8.

TWO DEATHS.

MY musings this morning are of a melancholy sort. Death has been speaking to my heart. He is a faithful monitor, an unlovely but a truthful, unfaltering guest, who will not suffer us to forget that we are children of a day. To-day he has broken the tie which held in life a lovely young friend, and uttered a pathetic sermon on the vanity of human hopes and the emptiness of worldly good.

This is the second voice of the gloomy preacher. Two months ago he "hurried hence" a very dear friend of ours, a bright and faithful young wife, true and warm-hearted, with love like diamond and fidelity like steel; unchanging amid all outward variations. From her beautiful home, adorned by her graceful and cordial hospitality; from the clinging arms and prayers of those dear ones to whom she was more than vital air; from the prospects of happiness and usefulness opening so fairly before her, he called

her away; and our heavy hearts lay in sack-cloth and ashes. Thanks be to God! the consolations of the gospel were abundant.

And now the dark, chilly presence is among us again; not unexpected; but who is ever wholly prepared? If human society ever gives a lovely victim, the grim destroyer has had such this time. Beautiful in person, fascinating in manner, of marked intellectuality, polished and fitted to shine anywhere, with devoted kindred, hosts of friends, an inviting earthly future—she whose absence makes many a heart ache, and leaves a vacancy never to be filled, is “beyond the sun.” Yes, even yesterday, lingering as for many months, so patiently sweet, so unmurmuring, so submissive, with soul so cloudless and serene, so thoughtful and attentive, even with vitality worn to a thread, yet so truly here, and among us, and of us—to-day gone never to be recalled, forever out of our mortal reach. Only the worn frame, lovely in death, its tenant fled to celestial felicity, left to gaze upon a moment, then reverently and tenderly lay “ashes to ashes” in the family burial-place. Ah! “who could bear life’s stormy

doom" when thus it comes were it not for "the grace of God that bringeth salvation," which has "brought life and immortality to light?" Blessed hope of eternal day and imperishable good! I shall see these dear young friends again. Unnaturally as it would seem, the bright, freshly-trimmed light of their lives has gone out, while mine yet flickers and holds out, with oil three-fourths gone and growing steadily dimmer at best. But ere long, as I fondly hope, we shall stand together before the blaze of "the uncreated sun in the eternal heaven." In the home of light and life there is "no darkness at all," of death, or sin, or sorrow.

Some weeks ago I wandered into an old grave-yard long unvisited, where sleep the bodies of a number of our ministers. My classmate, who was a brother so gentle, so Keats-like in genius and tenderness, advancing so swiftly along the path of fame, but with still swifter steps ascending the steeps of spirituality and immortality, rests in its sheltering fold. There too lies the old, fatherly, warm-hearted Irishman, at whose board I long had a seat; and there the chiv-

alric, polished, impulsive saint, buoyant, full of faith and love, who formed part of our home-circle for several years. They seemed to gather round me again, to rise and look at me with the ancient kindness and hearty welcome of the “days that are no more;” and with them came, by the associations which their names on the grave-stones awakened, two wives of preachers; and I went back over nearly a fourth of a century to the triumphant death-bed of one of them, by which I and my old Irish brother stood, witnessing “dying grace” rarely given; for hers had been a “living grace” almost as rare. And all around me was flowery and sweet, green with the advancing color of a late spring. I like to go to cemeteries in spring. Let all around be symbolic and prophetic of the resurrection. “Thy brother,” thy sister, thy loved ones, “shall rise again.” Unspeakably precious words! I pity indeed the wretch who buries his dead without hope of resurrection and another life. In hope of such a resurrection, and of “the life which knows no ending—the tearless life”—we have been burying our dead, the faithful,

worn-out servants of Christ, like our dear old Dr. Lee, and the lovely young people tenderly bound to us by ties of sweet associations, upon whose soft cheek the rosy light of youth has so sadly decayed. And from such burials I can go to preach with a more fervent spirit, "Jesus and the resurrection."

No. 9.**THE GENERAL CONFERENCE
OF 1882.**

HAVE saluted on their return the brethren of my district, clerical and lay, who were delegates to the recent General Conference. They look well, are in good health, well pleased, and bearing every mark of having been well treated. The splendid region of Middle Tennessee has done them good. Those of them who were used to the short grass of "the fourth district" have been wonderfully refreshed by grazing upon the blue-grass pastures of that fine country, and all have basked in the sunshine of the University of Vanderbilt and the headquarters of Southern Methodism. Those "head-quarters," it seems, are not like those of General Pope—"in the saddle"—but in a certain "House," which has had great mutations of fortune. But so it is, there it stands, upon the camel's hump, rather more settled and solidly anchored than since the war, and, for good or evil, it is head-quarters. Our

brethren have walked around that bulwark of our Methodist Zion, and told its towers. One of our delegates (not of my district) had special charge of its affairs, and gives a cheerful view of its present condition and future prospects.

But whatever may be true of the “head-quarters” aforesaid, there is no doubt of the welfare of our explorers who have journeyed thither. They are buoyant, in good temper with “the world and the rest of mankind.”

My own impression is that this General Conference of 1882 was, as a whole, a success. They have made good selections for the episcopal bench, some of them capital, all of them very good. They might have done five hundred times worse, and doubtless did not lack for temptation. Many Barkises were “willing,” while one man elect declined, and another is said to have shrunk with a whole night’s struggle. God bless and strengthen that self-distrusting, reluctant brother! Make him a real blessing to the Church by giving him grace to be “sufficient” for those “things” in contemplation of which any man may tremble! We are sorry

to have Dr. Haygood come up missing, but we will wait for him four or eight years—thankfully take four where we would have liked to have six—and gladly excuse those who were anxious to wear the miter, and who would have been “perfectly delighted” to have gone up, in the ballottings among the hundreds.

Wilson and Granbery, Parker and Har-grove—good men and true, strong, fresh, and reliable; they are a transfusion of younger blood into the rather sickly body of the episcopacy. We predict for them spiritual vic-tories and great usefulness.

No marked legislation seems to have char-acterized this session. The laity especially are very conservative, and not “given to change.” Beyond the Church - extension movement—in which we trust there is much possible good, and the more definite and pro-nounced temperance statute, there is little alteration of the Discipline. As usual, a thousand things were proposed, a multitude of absurdities, a grain of wheat here and there in a bushel of chaff.

I still believe, as I have always believed,

that one of the evils of our General Conference sessions, a great cause of useless consumption of time, a door of mischief and foolishness, is the "call of the Conferences" daily for so many days for "resolutions," etc. This "mud volcano" ought never to be opened at all. Memorials of Annual Conferences should be read and referred, but other propositions ought to go to a "tomb of the Capulets," where a committee of sextons should quietly decide whether the thing proposed be worthy of resurrection by a reference, and if so, put it in the *Daily*, with the name of the committee to which referred, and hand it to the chairman. A vote of two-thirds might be allowed to bring up a matter for consideration without reference to committee, and no debate be permitted on such a motion. Then only a very important matter—so important on its face—would receive such distinguished notice. One or two hours per diem consumed by reading and referring stuff, is time greatly in excess of what a body can spare in a twenty-five days' session, in which all the interests and work of the Church for four years are to be reviewed,

and its wants for four years more considered.

I trust that the next session, at Richmond, in 1886, will have a well-matured set of rules, which will prune off this excrescence upon our organization, long endured in pain.

I gladly note some improvement in the reports concerning Annual Conference Journals, coming from the Committee on Itinerancy. With its miserable faultiness (was there ever a poorer thing of its kind?) the *Daily* has hardly given us half of those reports. I can count up reports of only twenty-four out of thirty-nine Conferences. Our own and the Baltimore are among the missing. "Report hath it" that "the old Baltimore," supposed to have an infallible secretary, and which furnished the two chairmen of the committee (Martin and Rodgers), got a good switching this time about its Journal. The rest of us who have been quadrennially "birched" can enjoy this castigation over trivialities, while believing, as heretofore, that in all that constitutes the real value of a secretary, there is no amendment or change needed in Baltimore. The

feature of improvement I speak of is that there is less of the trivial and hypercritical in the notices of the Annual Conference Journals.

I believe, for my part, that there has always been an error on this subject in the work of the Committee on Itinerancy. The law requiring the Journals of the Annual Conferences to be sent to the General Conference for inspection was manifestly designed simply to bring under review at the General Conference the administration of the laws by the Annual Conferences; which are ministerial, not legislative bodies. It never was originally intended, I am bold to assert, that the manner of keeping the records should be the chief subject of review. It is the business of the Annual Conferences, presided over by the Bishops, to see to that; and between the two—Bishops and Conferences—there ought to be competency to see that the proceedings, like those of the Quarterly Conferences, “be faithfully recorded.” The practice, which has grown up gradually under the direction of martinets, of attempting to force every secretary into one model of jour-

nalizing, is an impracticable piece of folly which consumes time, produces irritation, and never accomplishes its object.

The errors of administration ought to be brought out prominently, and corrected with a kind but firm hand; but the attempt to destroy the individuality of secretaryship is a mistake, and will be always, as it has been in the past, a failure.

No. 10.

THE THOMASITES.



RAVELING the other morning in a freight-train, I fell in company with a "Thomasite," "soul-sleep'er," "Christadelphian," or something else of that kind. He was a kindly, conceited fellow, who imagined that he had the key of all religious knowledge, and with great complacency and wearisome iteration, opened that otherwise inaccessible treasure for the delectation of strangers.

I should have been silent when he began to talk, but for the fact that he commenced with scoffing at the doctrine of punishment for sin after this life. That style of thing is dangerous in its effect on some souls, and for their sake I took a round with him on the foundation of his strange doctrine. It seemed to be amusing and withal interesting to the train conductor, a healthy, fine young fellow, with an open countenance and a smile that smacked of home-life and the thought of mother and sisters. Burns said that "Scotia's

greatness" sprung out of its home life. I think I see in many young men's faces, as in that of this one, the place whereon the same blessed influence has written a security against spiritual shipwreck and wild wanderings from the ancient and simple faith of the gospel.

When it was all over, I thought of the odd blindness that makes a man of ordinary common sense overlook the overwhelming evidence of the existence of a soul in all men. And how a man who cannot see any thing in his fellow-creatures at large except "animated dust," mere organized matter—who takes his baby in his arms, and except for its possibility of after regeneration, regards it as a prettier sort of kitten or puppy, and if it were to die, would think it had gone to dust just like a puppy and no more—how, I say, such a man can fancy that belief in his views and holding that Christ and his apostles taught them, and immersion in a frog-pond upon profession of such faith can impart eternal life to these soulless creatures (!), is a marvel. It might make the gravest deity in the old "Olympic round" laugh like a circus clown!

It has long been an impression with me that in the majority of these people "there is a screw loose" intellectually. I do not mean that they are insane, or "cranks," or idiotic; but they are "speckled birds." They do not think as the majority of men think on any subject. There is a warp and twist about their mental processes—how produced or when, I cannot say—that is peculiar to their class. They are always splitting Churches on some fine-drawn or queer thread of speculation. There is an everlasting defining and dividing going on among them. They resemble a plate of mica—the thing is very thin and slight at first, but, to your surprise, it is capable of division laterally; and as you go on experimenting on its laminated structure, you have at last an immense number of broad, elastic, and exceedingly thin scales; and if your sight were keener and your instruments of division sharper, and more delicate, there is no telling whether or not you ever would stop splitting.

Ah me! The Lord help us! My traveling companion had a head that stuck out behind just under the brim of his hat, with

a sharply marked protrusion. I believe it is there the phrenologists locate self-conceit, and perhaps combativeness. May be phrenology is half right. Those are the elements of your disputatious champion, full of his dogma, and armed *cap-a-pie* for an encounter with the rest of mankind.

I once traveled a circuit in Virginia in which some of the greatest early conquests of Dr. John Thomas were made. While there I heard what I am about to relate. I subsequently became well acquainted with the very eccentric opponent of Thomas, and learned from him the literal truth of the story. It may not be new to the readers of the *Advocate*, but it is too good to die. The gem of anecdote will bear resetting.

When the Thomasites became numerous and aggressive, the Presbyterian minister, then settled over a neighboring church—Mr. Watt—who was a man of learning and acute mind, and who had the most singular voice I ever heard—high in pitch, fine, and rather whining in tone, and with a little odd turn to it every now and then, which was at once inimitable and unimaginable—thought it his

duty to "drive away erroneous and strange doctrine" like this from the borders of his congregation, and so preached a strong sermon against it on Galatians i. 8. This provoked a challenge for a debate (these people live on disputation) with Dr. Thomas himself, which was promptly accepted. The day came, an immense crowd was assembled, a moderator appointed, and the debate began. Mr. Watt soon perceived that his antagonist did not have the knowledge of Hebrew with which he was usually accredited, and which he made a great show of possessing; and so, after challenging him to read a passage out of the Hebrew Bible at random (which was cautiously declined), felt the more confidence in attacking his criticisms of the original words translated "soul" in the Old Testament. Thomas had asserted that so far from meaning a spiritual, immaterial, immortal principle, these words often meant "air," "breath," "perfume" even; and making the blunder of connecting with the word in dispute another word, "bottles" (*e. g.*, "bottles" of perfume), he averred with some flourish in marking the absurdity of the common view,

that the word so patly rendered “soul” even meant “a smelling-bottle!”

When Watt came to reply, he first seriously refuted the false criticism, and showed its source in the ignorance of the pretentious reformer; and carrying the war into Africa, he gave examples of what would follow from such interpretation. Opening at the forty-second Psalm he read, with that remarkable and unique voice at its highest pitch, and with its queerest turn, “Why art thou cast down, O my smelling-bottle! and why art thou disquieted within me?” The effect was instantaneous and overwhelming. Thomas sprung to his feet and said, “You are beating the air, sir!” “No,” retorted Watt, “I am beating Dr. John Thomas, and beating him well!”

It may be safely said that Thomasism never recovered from that blow. The young men of the county, full of fun, rang the changes on Watt’s citation from Psalms. Careless about the fact that the antagonists were discussing Hebrew, not Greek, and thinking only how absurd the thing could be made when applied to any part of the Bible, they

took up the New Testament, and read, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own smelling-bottle?" and read and laughed, and laughed and read, for many a day.

There still linger in those regions a few Thomasite families, but they are hopelessly dwindling. No resurrection or revival awaits them. Like the bodies of the wicked, according to their theory, they are bound to extinction, and no baptism will give them eternal life.

No. 11.

COUNTRY CHURCH-YARDS.

OME time since at a country church I noticed near by an inclosure of white palings around about half an acre of ground. On inspection it proved to be a grave-yard.

The people of that vicinity had discovered the value of a common burial-place for their church community. Their dead were no longer to be scattered over a wide neighborhood, at neglected and forsaken private burying-places, but were to be collected into a receptacle near their house of worship, always in sight when the worshipers assembled at the house of God; their remains protected from desecration, and laid away in squares and lots green and fresh looking even in winter, and beautified with ornamental shrubs and flowers. I have seen some other movements of the same kind. I hail them with great joy, and hope to see the practice obtain universally.

I hope I shall live to see a cemetery at

almost every Methodist church in the country.

Very beautiful are the grave-yards near the old Presbyterian and Lutheran and other churches in the Valley of Virginia. As I write I think of one near the "Blowing Cave." As the stage turned down the slanting road and the "westering" sun glistened from the Cow Pasture (or may be it is the Calf Pasture) River, the white grave-stones gleamed out of the grassy sod, and added a charm of sacred rest to the scenery. Unmolested, and yet unforgotten and guarded, the "forefathers of the hamlet" slept around the house of God—"the God not of the dead but of the living, for all live unto him." Alive for evermore! "absent from the body," but "present with the Lord," the deceased saints of that region looked down from heavenly heights upon the place where their flesh rested in hope, and nothing in the scene could have offended their sanctified tastes or caused disgust toward their "parted friends still in the vale confined," struggling in the warfare with the world of ungodliness. No such pleasing memory remains of many a bury-

ing-place which I have seen in my wanderings.

Occasionally as I look from the windows of the fast-moving train, shooting over valleys and through cut hills, my eyes fall on a melancholy spot. The thick-growing sassafras or gum, the wild plum or thorn, untrained and untrimmed, in rank and forbidding luxuriance, marks a spot denied to agriculture; whether a rock-pile or a "snakery" might be doubtful were it not that the remnants of a decaying plank fence or paling, from which all traces of paint have vanished, proclaim that it is a so-called grave-yard. There is no memorial of the dead, no dates or names. Close search might reveal some rough head and foot-stones, taken from the field hard by and "set up" when the graves were filled. The space between them hints as to the age (by the height) of the dead. These short graves hold "somebody's darlings." That long one yonder may be a patriarch of the group, or a tall youth fallen in the prime of his hopeful life. But the place has been sold away from its original owners; scarcely anybody around could tell about them, and soon nobody will

know or care; and the besom of decay and neglect will sweep away all traces of a “reserved” burying-place.

In her childhood and youth my mother, who was an orphan, had a very dear friend who was a mother to her. That lady, of good family, of fair possessions, of a wide connection, was buried in an old family burying-place, on the land of my brother-in-law, “reserved” in all the deeds of conveyance. My mother, when on her death-bed, desired that her body might be laid near the grave of her faithful and revered friend. She would sleep also in a few hundred yards of the chamber of her only daughter. We complied with her wish as far as possible; but though less than forty years had elapsed, nobody could point out the grave of that noble woman. Her son, a venerable and infirm man, was still alive, at the distance of five or six miles, but had not been to the neighboring village for a long while. Possibly he could have guessed where it was. Possibly my mother in her life had ventured a guess of the same kind while walking under the honey-locusts and persimmons. That old man is gone, all his

generation are probably gone; which of the obscure and fast-sinking stones once set up at the head and foot mark her resting-place there is probably none upon earth that can tell. The uninclosed common—beaten by feet of sheep and ox, unlike the surrounding pasture only in that it has some trees and sunken spaces, with singular obstructive stones here and there—hides the dust of a noble lady of refinement, comparative wealth, character, and a wide circle of kindred of great respectability! The resurrectionist's spade or the archangel's trump will be required to identify her grave! The graves of the grandfather and grandmother of a distinguished American general are in a little corner of outlying field between two roads just beyond Farmville. The English gentleman now owning the farm made an offer concerning the rescue of that place from obliteration, which he informed me was not responded to. His plow runs up to the tangled wild of plum-bushes, rock-piles, and running briars—annually contracting—which distinguishes the resting-place of the old people. In a few years, I think, their bones

will sleep under the tilled glebe, forgotten and forsaken till Christ comes. Somewhere along the course of the old road from Suffolk to Portsmouth lie the bones of Robert Williams, the first Methodist preacher that ever spoke the words of eternal life in Virginia. It is barely possible (though improbable) that he was buried in the old church-yard at Benn's, but otherwise the conjecture of Dr. Bennett is probably correct—that the plow-boy whistles his jocund air, as all unconscious he drives his share over the dust of the holy and great pioneer of Methodism!

Let us make these calamitous accidents impossible hereafter by making and maintaining at all our country churches a "God's acre," beautiful and well inclosed—if possible, with brick or stone. Let it be laid out in seemly and attractive style. Let the women, those ministers of grace and beauty in every community, see that it is planted with evergreens and adorned with flowering shrubs and plants. Grant each family a plat. There let each church-community bury its dead; not as the criminal and suicide—"at the forks of a road, with a stake in his

heart"—but so that the lost may be "had in remembrance," and their last resting-place be hallowed above common ground forever more.

No. 12.

THE QUARTER STRETCH.

GHEN I was a boy my father lived in a country village. Near it, in a certain year, there was established a race-course. The "sporting" propensities of the community at length reached that height. There had been gamblers in it "of old time;" there were some connoisseurs in horse-flesh. The racing mania was then at its height in the United States. "Boston" was about retiring on his glory as an unequalled Virginia steed. With the cultivation of some local celebrities in the way of fast animals and the preparation of the course for the regular "races," there was much excitement among the juniors of every family. My father did not allow us to attend races; but in our excursions to the woods and fishing, and the like, we took the race-track in the way coming back, and walked around the stables, saw the celebrated animals, and looked at the wonderful circle itself, with its judges' stand, etc. And on race-days some

of us mounted to the top of the house, and, little affected by the splendid mountain scenery that stretched off, under a glorious sky, before our eyes, bent our gaze, with true fallen proclivities, upon the earth and its distant race-course. There we had occasional glimpses of the hotly-contested field, as a group of flying horses, with trim mountings, and jockeys bent forward over their necks, flashed across the line of our strained vision. Now and then they were "neck to neck." Report said, in many a case, breathlessly told, that "a blanket could have been laid on both as they ran." From our house-top aerie one very important part of the track came into view. They called it the "quarter stretch." It was the last fourth of a mile before the judges' stand was reached. Victory hung upon that "stretch." Often it was snatched from a favorite animal in that quarter of a mile. If, when the foremost horse passed the stand, any unfortunate animal was behind a certain point in that stretch, they said he was "distanced," and he could run no more in any "heat" of that race. (I remember the intense astonishment, mortification,

and disgust we boys felt when it was announced that "Hard Cider"—a village nag of great popularity with us, as we viewed daily his sleek black coat and arching neck "clothed with thunder"—had been actually "distanced" in his first race! That was also his last. He was a doomed animal from that time. He was condemned to ignominious pulling in a wagon team.)

As I have been proceeding on this fourth round of quarterly-meetings, that old race-course has occurred to me, and furnished an image of things ecclesiastical. We are on the "quarter stretch!" The last two furlongs of our ecclesiastical-year track are, in part, past already. Swift feet hurry along the fatal "stretch." Spiritually, financially, clerically, we are putting forth all our powers for victory or defeat. By the 15th of November every preacher, every church, every circuit, and every station will have passed the judges' stand triumphant or "second best," or, it may be, will have hauled up "distanced," disgraced, and, leaping the side-rail in disgust, have made off for the stable of some subterfuge or poor excuse. What

whipping and spurring of stewards to "bring up" deficiencies in payments; what plunging and kicking and rearing of obstinate, stingy, and unfaithful members under the lively persuadings of the officials; what racing and reaching after lost opportunities and fleeing hopes of preachers and workers of all sorts; what panting and blowing and heaving of overworked people of every class, aiming to do the work of six months in one, does this old "quarter stretch" witness! It has seen the like, perhaps worse, for many a year.

On one side the sight is suggestive of good. It is well for faithful men, even at the last time, and with a slim chance of success, to attempt the retrieving of a state of affairs which has been brought about by the unbelief and neglects and sins of others. It is a noble thing in that noble band of men that never bowed the knee to any Baal of worldliness or idolatry, when they resolve, if possible, to save a battle about to be lost by the treachery of a membership which cannot be depended upon. They will have one more protracted meeting; they will make one

more effort to begin a Sunday-school; they will make sacrifices to see the preacher paid in full, and not suffer the collections to fall behind; they will stir up their hearts once more to infuse into the body ecclesiastic some life and vigor and ardor in Christ's cause. Faithful souls, may God's blessing abide with you! If all the members of the Church were like you, the country would, spiritually speaking, "blossom as the rose." And you have your reward. Sometimes it is of success. The inert and faithless cannot withstand your fervid piety. They are aroused, and do wonderfully better than was expected; and at the last moment, when failure seems imminent, there is poured out a blessing which there is not room to contain. Or if failure in some degree comes anyhow, its force is in a measure broken; there is a foundation for future steps of recovery; there is a seed of hope and cheerfulness left; and the answer of a good conscience, in your cases, sweetens the bitterness of default.

But other reflections are awakened as we look at the "quarter stretch" struggle, especially at its financial side. Why should this

annual effort be necessary? Why will men deliberately put off what they know must be done, and that ere long, or else failure will ensue? I venture a few guesses at the "why:"

1. Some do not believe there is disgrace in failure. It does not hurt them for the preacher to be deficient upon his small salary. He can stand it; has been standing it a long time. He and his family know how to pinch. He has done faithful work; if not perfect in its excellence, it is very good for the price. He has gone, in wet and dry weather, preaching, visiting, and administering discipline. His allowance is very necessary for his support, but he can manage to pay one-sixth of it himself. True, the richest man on the circuit has never been guilty of half such liberality in support of the gospel, but he is not a preacher, and is supposed to be unequal to such a stretch of grace. And it is no mortification to have Dalefield Circuit read out at Conference as giving four dollars to Foreign Missions and one dollar and a half to Domestic Missions, and one-third of the assessment for Conference Collection and Educational and Bishops' funds.

One of the stewards has already asked the presiding elder if he does not think they could get about one or two hundred dollars appropriation from the Domestic Mission Board. They do not mind being pilloried in the "Minutes." The truth is, they do not often see the "Minutes." The preacher had a hard time selling his nine copies this year. So they have taken eleven months and twenty days to find out what they could do, and have not maintained, in actual execution, the standard of their conjecture made at that late day. It will make very little difference whether they do or not, especially a hundred years from this time.

2. Some lack system, and do not act with any method. If they would be precise, and ascertain regularly what they can do, and begin to do it early in the year, they would accomplish more, vastly more, and do it with much greater ease. The race would be won before the "quarter stretch" was reached, and they would simply have to draw rein and gallop victoriously, at an easy pace, over that famous ground. I am satisfied that this is the evil factor in a multitude of cases.

Acting on principle, and acting systematically, would cure many evils in spiritual and financial matters. Especially would it cure this straining and gasping in the attempt to meet expenses. If every man would "lay by him in store" as God has prospered him every week, or determine by some other plan how much exactly he can venture to give, and give it steadily and stately, there would be no need for such breathless exertions to raise comparatively small amounts. In some cases the preacher cultivates system in his membership with respect to the "collections," while the stewards practice irregularity among themselves, and confirm the people in their lack of method with respect to the preacher's salary; and so, at the "quarter stretch" he has his collections in hand, and they leave such a faithful man of God not only in danger of loss, but often actually deficient, by their accumulated arrears. Spurring and whipping over the "stretch" will not save the race. And sometimes such a preacher is told, for his consolation, that if he had not raised money for missions, etc., he would have got his own pay!

3. There is a great deal of dead wood in our membership. I think as a body we have less attachment to our Church than any other people. There is less Church pride among us. We do not feel stung as others do when comparisons are made to our disadvantage. We have managed somehow to get into our membership many people who have little or no religion, no zeal, no sense of personal responsibility to God and the Church, little intelligence, less information about religious matters; who lie still to be acted upon, preached at, scolded, stirred up; an inert, lethargic mass, "at ease in Zion." I believe we would be better if the whole of such membership were cut off. But, as we retain it, it forms a basis of calculation and expectation. We seem to have so many members and so much property and resources. But that part of our ecclesiastical tree is dead. It does not sprout a branch or put forth bud or leaf or flower or fruit. These are our habitual neglecters of worship, our chronic grumblers and growlers, our ecclesiastical Bedouins, rambling about to every new thing, the bane of faithful stewards and collectors, the heart-

sickening of ministers and pious people. The delinquencies of such “sons of Belial” are to be anticipated, but it is not so easy to provide against them. A steward in tow of such people resembles Elliott, in “South Carolina Sports,” convoying an immense load of harpooned devil-fish. After immense toil, paying out line, rowing and pulling against tide and wind, at the critical moment his harpoon pulls out of the disgusting mass, and it sinks out of sight by its own weight. He has “toiled all night, and caught” worse than “nothing.” He cannot even “make a show openly” of his dead monster.

But enough of this. When this sees the light of print we shall have run our year’s race. In “Conference assembled” we will be reviewing the irrevocable past and planning for our new year.

Reader, consider these things. If you have had any part in causing the difficulties of the “quarter stretch,” amend forthwith.

No. 13.

UNCONSCIOUS SELFISHNESS.

NE of the perplexing problems of practical life is the case of men, otherwise good, out of whose living there crops here and there an offensive and sometimes disgusting selfishness. What are we to think of them? How hard it is, especially for generous, true-hearted, self-sacrificing men to believe the piety of these men to be genuine! To recognize their religion seems like indorsing the devil's paper. Yet, while in their faults they "offend" every right-minded man to the point oftentimes of awakening a holy indignation, they are in many features unmistakably good and devout. If ministers of the gospel, they may be laborious, eloquent, earnest, spiritually-minded in most things; if laymen, upright, honest, amiable, zealous for religion and morality, unspotted in domestic and social relations. To condemn them utterly is to adopt a standard which sooner or later will destroy every man's hopes; for who is not faulty? who is without

serious blemishes? whose motives are always of the purest and loftiest type in every thing? We allow that they are pious; and sometimes affecting proofs of this come out of their private papers or secret history. But we feel tempted to withdraw the admission of their claims to piety when we run foul of their weakness. It is an unlovely type of character.

We once knew a man of a devout and most serious cast. He was a man of prayer and of purest living in the prominent features of his behavior. He was a minister, and attained great eminence as a preacher. His eloquence, fervor, and power were unexcelled. He held the soundest views of theology and experimental religion. Being well acquainted with him, we mentioned in his presence our intention to journey in a certain direction. He, it seems, was about changing his residence, and with his whole family going in the same direction. He at once expressed *great pleasure* that we were to be fellow-travelers; but he presently unfolded the reason. He mentioned, with perfect artlessness, that we could render him a service at starting, in a matter which

threatened to be burdensome. Musing a little, he bethought himself of another place where we could also do him a like service. And renewing his expression of pleasure at our going, *he did not say a syllable besides, nor afterward when we met*, indicating that he had ever taken another view of our going than that of an unexpected service to himself. He was glad that we were going as a man when his shoes are soiled would be glad to meet a boot-black, with a fair chance to have the boot-black's services gratuitously rendered. It was amusing—the innocent simplicity of the whole thing—but it was also provoking.

A commoner form of this evil is the formation of a habit of so acting that we make the impression upon our fellow-men that there is *some ulterior object of a selfish nature* in every thing we do. People learn to think, we educate them to think, that we *never speak or act from the unstudied impulse of an open, candid nature*. They are led, whether or no, to look below our words and acts—the most trivial or ordinary—for *some deeper or more real meaning*.

The late Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford in the English Establishment, a son of the great William Wilberforce, seems to have been such a man. Of great abilities in every respect, especially as a preacher, and despite his errors and defects, a man of a devout and truly penitent and believing frame of mind, he succeeded in setting even such a man as Prince Albert thoroughly against him. That nobleman—worthy nephew of King Leopold, worthy consort of such a Queen as Victoria—had, in the course of fifteen years' acquaintance with Wilberforce, come to this judgment, expressed to the Earl of Aberdeen: “He does every thing for some object. He has a motive for all his conduct.” And by this he meant to express “a suspicion” as to the Bishop’s “sincerity and disinterestedness.”

Bishop Wilberforce is unfortunately not alone in this respect. A number of illustrations come to our remembrance of just such men. After sufficient acquaintance (although our first impressions may have been like Prince Albert’s of Samuel Wilberforce, at his speech in Exeter Hall, June 1, 1841),

we become satisfied that these people "do every thing for some object." We sometimes see plainly what that object is; but when we do not, we are none the less satisfied that something ulterior is lurking in the private counsels of our plausible and polite, and perhaps highly-accomplished, brother. In the political phraseology of the day, he is "making a slate;" and in that "slate" we may be sure that his *own interest* occupies a central position. Such men appear to be incapable of understanding the apostolic direction, "In honor preferring one another." They are always thinking, behind all their speeches and acts that do not appear to mean this, of how to take care of themselves to the best advantage. The indulgence and cultivation of this spirit prepare the way for the occasional lapses into more open and downright selfishness by which some end is gained. Then the sin is more palpable, and probably ceases to be what we have termed "unconscious."

Much of this unworthy spirit is, beyond all doubt, not understood in its true nature by the man who is possessed by it. Like

men under the dominion of covetousness and egotism, the victim has given his blemish a flattering name, and thinks of it under the glamour of that deceptive title. We have known men exacting sacrifices of everybody in their families and making none themselves, who imagined that they were patterns of domestic loveliness. We have seen exacting, fretful women whom nothing could please, who supposed themselves to be the most amiable companions in the world. We have known preachers always maneuvering for soft places, hinting for favors, taking "short cuts" upon a competing brother, and not objecting to a little self-advertising, who have reviewed the whole process in a "little Jack Horner" spirit, and wound up the transaction with Jack's reflection: "What a nice boy am I!" Could these people, and all others who belong to this line of business, see themselves faithfully reflected in one of the mirrors that may exist, for all we know, in another world but do not in this, they would be equally annoyed and confounded.

The reader will "suffer a word of exhortation." Try to be *externally* exactly what

you design to be internally. The evil spirit will tempt you to lay on a gloss of some sort. You must be polite, obliging, politic, *suave*, if you would do good ; and in order to this, concealment of some kind is necessary. Men cannot afford to show their thoughts to everybody. All of which, rightly understood, is sound doctrine; but it is easily perverted. The best way is not to need concealment. Do not be *excessively cordial* in manner when cool in heart; you will end by being a knave in your selfish hypocrisy, feigning what you never feel. If naturally reserved or distant, try to get rid of that defect, but not by assuming what you do not feel. One of the very meanest manifestations of a petty selfishness is *an assumption of universal and ever-present cordiality for the purpose of winning the good-will of our fellow-men*. Do not *gush*, when the stream of disinterested love in your bosom is, as you know, a very tiny streamlet. Wait for a natural “*freshet*” before you open the flood-gates. Deeply study and try to practice Philippians ii. 4. There are “things of others.” Yes, really, there is somebody else in the world besides yourself; and other

people have “things” in the way of interests, wants, desires, affections, goods. Try to realize it. Cultivate a going out toward them, not a sucking in toward yourself all the time; go out of your way to be accommodating and obliging; *suffer* occasionally for another’s sake; do not exact all you are entitled to; sit in the shade of obscurity sometimes, of choice, as a matter of personal discipline. A *thoroughly unselfish* good man is only “a little lower than the angels.” Climb toward that height.

No. 14.

DOERS OF THE WORD.

 NTERING a church of a sister denomination a short time since, we saw over the recess behind the pulpit the language of James i. 22. Impressive sermon! We heard the preacher on the wall—Doers, and not hearers only! Yes, that is it. The grand old apostle's figure is not bad—of the transient look in the glass, with its “straightway” forgetting “what manner of man” it was the mirror reflected. That is what is the matter with great numbers of the hearers who throng our churches every week—they *hear*, and that is the end of it; hear and forget, hear and never practice, hear and remain unchanged; thoughts the same, words the same, habits the same, life-principles the same, the view of things unaltered for the temporary intrusion on Sundays of a very different picture.

How much good *doctrine* comes forth from our Methodist pulpits, in our cities only, every Sunday! How much from the country pul-

pits on every side ! What if all were *done*, as well as listened to—what rare Christians we should have, what growing, improving, active, faithful men and women ! And why not ? Do we not go thither to hear, that we may do ? Do we plan in advance only to hear ? Do we deny the obligation to practice even more than to hear ?

What a shrinking up at once it would cause of the army of captious and unreasonable critics ! Other business—urgent business—for them ! *Doing* the word ; ah, that would fill heart and hands ! No time for cool and merciless objections to this man's style and that man's manner, to this preacher's education and that preacher's mode of preparation. Let him take care of himself. “To his own Master he standeth or falleth.” Enough for us, and more than enough, to be *taking care of ourselves* ! What a stock already laid up of duty known but not performed, of truth enforced upon us but never illustrated in our lives, of errors to be corrected, of bad habits to be renounced, of good deeds to be done ere “the night cometh”—the night “when no man can work.”

What a stirring in the army of drones! What a buzzing of wings and putting forth of feet and arms! What another shaking in “the valley of dry bones!” No more sleep, no more dullness—inattentive, phlegmatic! So much to be *done* presents itself, that there is no space for these by-gone amusements or torpors. Up, and be *doing*, thou sluggard! Spiritual paralysis has well-nigh smitten you. When was it that you ever *did any thing*? You hear—in your sort—every Sunday, but on what day do you practice what you hear? What can the preacher count upon you for?

It so happened when we last sat in this same church for a short time, it was at a *marriage*. We do not remember so much about noticing that inscription on the wall then. But this last time it was at a *funeral*. In connection with all the solemn surroundings, the habiliments of mourning, the coffin—flower-covered, but a coffin still; the solemn hymns and prayers; how soul-piercing those words on the wall! They needed not “a man’s hand over against the candle-stick” to be writing them.

How differently we hear or read at differ-

ent times! In eternity we will do some momentous *remembering*. Let us turn over a new leaf in this matter of hearing. “Not hearers only”—no, God forbid!—but “doers of the word.”

No. 15.

THE TUNNEL OF DEATH.



TUNNEL with light at both ends.” So a friend of ours in momentary expectation of departure out of this life, called death. The physician in attendance—a non-professor, as so many of his calling are, but should not be—wrung his hands, and with a look of the deepest concern, said he “would give worlds for such a faith!”

The saying is true. Death to Christians, as to other men, is untried. All within the entrance is dark, gloomy, and forbidding. The trains which pass in with human passengers have never returned. Neither voice nor signal comes through the Plutonian darkness. In that respect,

Love may haunt the grave of love,
And watch the mold in vain.

All is lighted on this side. Busy, excited, interested spectators pass and repass in the full blaze of day. Is there also light at the

other end? Do the passengers sit only a short time in the darkness and listen to the rumbling wheels on which they make transition from one world to the other? Do they presently break out into light and beauty on that other side?

So the Christian firmly believes. As he believes on Jesus Christ, he believes on him as a risen and exalted Lord. “He lives who once was dead.” That Saviour “entered the grave in mortal flesh;” he *went through the tunnel*. He alone—save the few whom he raised from the dead more than eighteen hundred years ago—*has come back through it*. He reports *the light on the other side*, and we “have believed his report.” As thoroughly as we “receive the witness of men” about tunnels we have never gone through, we receive the witness of God, the Son, which is “greater,” more reliable than that testimony of men. And in this we have an immense advantage over men who tremble and doubt and fear. By this faith death is deprived of its sting, the grave of its victory. We fear not to die; we yield up our spirits at our Lord’s command, expecting to “see light in

his light," at the other end of the tunnel of death. There we "shall see him as he is," and with him see

Those angel faces smile
Which we have loved and lost the while.

"For we *know* that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Such knowledge is invaluable in its power to sustain and cheer. It silences all the tormenting questionings which otherwise, with their ceaseless din, distract our souls in every moment of reflection.

"What after death for me remains?" Who that rejects Christianity can answer such a question satisfactorily? Peering into the abyss of darkness into which sweeps down the endless procession of mortal men, their works and their hopes, what light can he pretend to see glimmering ever so faintly out of the dread shade? If self-deceived, the Christian is happy in his delusion. He will be as well off in any event, certainly no worse in any respect, for the delusive consolations which cannot—says the unbeliever—

be realized beyond the grave. Whatever the truth (and of this we have on our side all that men have longed, prayed, and hoped for), it is better to believe that we are going through a tunnel bounded at each end by life and light than sinking into a bottomless horror of gloomy night and endless blackness.

No. 16.**STARTING THE MACHINE.**

HE machine I am going to write about starting is not my pen. That has not been idle, though in this present name and form it has been in a state of suspended animation for more than a year. I came in on the "quarter stretch" of 1881-82, and have been dormant in the line of *recreations* ever since.

That machine is the presiding eldership in activity. Duly set up in its place by episcopal authority, oiled and lubricated by the unction of ecclesiastical commendation, with the engineer standing in his place, will the thing *move*? And when it begins its motion, will its energy expend itself in empty and useless revolutions on an axis, like the wheels of a locomotive spinning around on a greased spot in a steep grade? or will it pull a respectable load along, and thunder through the forests by day and light up the darkness of night with its moving fires, and scare up the echoes with its loud blasts? Is it going

to go, and to some purpose, or not? that's the question.

The district stewards' meeting will be here in a few days to provide a stated supply of fuel.

I have no fellow-feeling with the objurgations which some rash men among our clergy have poured upon the heads of these brethren. True, some of them may have shown a parsimonious proclivity to cutting down salaries; some may have esteemed it "the whole duty of man" (in their estate) to lay all burdens on others, and diminish them as much as possible on their own appointments; some may have meted out to the stranger what they would have thought too little for a favorite and well-known elder; but that is simply to say they are mortal, and we may look for infirmities among them as these are found in the incumbents of the eldership.

The thing most difficult for them to get rid of—which is an evil—is a *lack of sympathy* with the officer for whose support they provide. He is a chief shepherd *nominally*, but in fact he is *nobody's pastor*; and the man who goes for a broad and liberal policy with

respect to his preacher's support is not so certain to feel the same principle at work in his breast when the presiding elder is concerned. The result is that the salaries of presiding elders have not been so large as the amounts allowed the same man or men of equivalent talent when serving as pastors. A man of tolerable ability in a station has a furnished house and from \$1,500 to \$2,000 salary; while the majority of presiding elders (and some of them have been men of mark) receive \$1,400 to \$1,800, and provide their own houses and pay their traveling expenses over a large district, amounting sometimes to nearly \$100 per annum.

The tendency to such lack of sympathy, though in actual practice it may not always prove to be so, is greatest in those charges where the pastor gives the highest satisfaction. In such cases the steward is apt to be the reflection of a sentiment more or less widely diffused among the people of the charge, that nothing we can do is too good for our pastor, and we ought to do as little as possible for any "outside character," such as a presiding elder or a bishop, with whom our

relation is indirect and has none of the closeness and tenderness belonging to that which exists between us and our preacher.

But whether these things be so or not, the stewards will meet, and when the "first round" is duly published, the "tread-mill"—as Dr. Bennett used to call his editorial work—will feel the weekly touch, and more or less the *daily pressure* of the presiding elder's feet, and *motion* will commence. A year's work will have begun; at least what is "cut out" for a year. We cannot yet know whose feet will this year pause upon the road of life, and whose staggering steps will turn toward the rest where Spiller and Michaels lie in calm repose. It may be one of us who command the main divisions of the working force will fall. God help us to start aright—with holy motives, with a consecrated spirit, with earnest and brave purpose! If we do not *save souls*, edify believers and turn sinners to repentance, lead men to holy living and stir up the Church to greater usefulness and more extensive good works of all kinds, *our labor will be in vain*.

Sometimes a feeling of faintness comes

over me as I look forward to the demands and needs of the district in spiritual things. “Who is sufficient for these things?” What an array of darkness, ignorance, unbelief, backsliding in heart, formalism, pride, selfishness, corruption, have my brethren and I to meet and contend with! But “the sword of the Lord and of Gideon” is drawn on our side. We gained somewhat last year. We will stand fast on our vantage-ground, and plan to do valiant things through our Lord and by the power of his might. There is a great deal in *beginning promptly and well*. The most popular preacher will mar his acceptability and success by *dilatory movements*, being *always behind*, however little. Let us be “on time,” and give the great enemy no start of us.

No. 17.

THE ITINERANT'S SACRIFICE.

THE preachers newly appointed to my district are just getting into place. Some have come a long distance. All of them have been at more or less trouble in removing, not to say any thing of expense (which may or may not be repaid). Loss which cannot be made good is always caused by removal. This worry and damage they usually bear with reasonable cheerfulness. If now and then they fret a little or inwardly chafe, it is not to be wondered at; for then, perhaps, they are most keenly reminded of what is *the sacrifice of the itinerary*. Then they feel—and with it the iron enters their soul—that they have not, and never can have, *a home*. Very comfortable sojourning-places they have in many instances; but no spot to call *their own*, to adorn, to make sweet with little things which, small in themselves, shall have delightful associations, to leave behind to the wife and children that survive. The few very fortunate ones may

comfort their hearts—if that will comfort—with the thought that, when they are disabled or dead, enough is laid up with which to buy a home and settle the household. To the family it is a rather sorrowful view that home begins where joy ends, that settlement is possible when a last breaking up has occurred. And the greater part have no such consolation. With a heart strengthened by faith in the Divine Providence, with an eye cleared from the natural dimness of tears by habitual looking at unseen things, they calmly gaze along the empty line of vision, which is unbroken by any “cottage in this wilderness” this side of or beyond the spot where in anticipation they see the mound of grass or red mold that marks the end of their career. This is *the* sacrifice of itinerants.

To preach for a small salary, to live under disadvantages for the education of children, to change residence often, and sometimes from a healthy to an unhealthy climate, to be dependent upon unappreciative and at times disagreeable people for a living—these are trials and things to be borne, when borne at all, for Christ’s sake; but

all of them have some mitigation. This other has none.

The poorest laborer may rent his house, and, while health and industry last, may keep possession of the spot he has learned to love as home. By economy and the aid of building associations the poorest man may gradually find for himself a refuge that shall have as much permanence as the instability of human affairs will allow. I have seen here and there, in city and country, those sweet little domestic nests in various stages of progress—some lovely with the accumulations of years and the ingenuity of loving hearts; some showing signs of the rawness of a new enterprise, a recent if hopeful beginning.

For the bulk of our preachers no such prospect discloses itself, even to a fertile imagination. And to be *homeless*; to know that *never* during life will there be a permanent spot, however humble, around which may cluster home affections, and on which may be lavished the outlay of hand and heart; and that after death the loved ones who survive us will have no place to take shelter in

from the clouds of bereavement and the storms of adversity—*this is hard to bear*. To enter upon such a life is to make, humanly speaking, a *great sacrifice*.

No wonder, one may think, that it had its conception in the brain of a man to whom flight from his wife was a relief (being separation from a woman who “rendered twenty years of his life as uncomfortable as a life spent in continual locomotion could be”), and was especially cherished and maintained by a race of bachelors and widowers like Asbury.

Nevertheless, the early itinerants were heroes, and the system itself has points of power and value and capabilities which have wrought wonders and given it a durability and vitality which so far mock the prophecies of decay made by Isaac Taylor and others like him.

Let us of this later generation, who see and feel its weak point, ponder what remedy may be discovered to heal that deadly hurt. Several things occur to me as desirable in that view:

1. The erection forthwith of comfortable

parsonages in every charge. We already have many. This includes pleasant and sufficient furnishing. Thereby, when these are everywhere, the passing from one to another will be like having a warm and cordial welcome to the Church's own house on earth, which is big enough to hold *all* its "servants for Jesus' sake." And do not forget the presiding elders. Three out of ten districts have parsonages, and all these were built and in large measure paid for by the energy and unceasing toil of the elders. As far as the Church at large is concerned, it would seem as if on their motion and by their planning the other seven will *never* be built. But not the less should they be. The Church is at fault, and that grievously, not to build them.

2. The building and endowment liberally of a *Preachers' Home*, where disabled men and the families of the deceased who need shelter may find it. My heart has ached this year for men who are compelled to superannuate, and more for men who ought to retire but feel that they *cannot*, that it means the almshouse or a kindred fate. We have rich men who could turn this anguish into

resignation. If they would, they could buy some sweet, retired spot, and put it in order for the reception of the worn-out man of God and his wife, or his widow and the most dependent of her children. The utter desolation of being cast off or forgotten, or of eating the bread of bitter dependence, would be averted.

When will the thought of doing this arise in some mind capable of executing it? Are the poor to do all the desiring and yearning after charitable works, and the rich forever hold and use the money without one movement of soul toward these good things? Then, how fearful the curse of such riches! how deep the damnation of such misused power for good! "Charge them that are rich in this world that . . . they be rich in good works." Some count their wealth by thousands. For what good works would an enemy of benevolence "stone" them? A few insignificant gifts that bear no proportion at all to the income they have had for years is all they can exhibit to a God who cannot be imposed upon.

Meanwhile the faithful itinerant goes along

to his work, year after year adding to a “record” that is “on high.” The Lord Jesus, when he “comes the second time without sin unto salvation,” will give him a “recompence of reward.”

No. 18.

THE ITINERANT'S WIFE.



OULD a volume like the "Sketches" of Dr. Lafferty be prepared, of which the sketches and likenesses should be of the wives of our preachers, and not of the preachers themselves, it would be a more interesting volume, if not a more salable one, than that remarkable production. It is not their lot or calling to "preach the word;" as a general rule, preaching women have not been a success or a blessing among us. Of praying women we have had many, and wives of preachers among them, whose life-long piety has left a savor as of "ointment poured forth." But there have been many, neither preaching nor praying in public, who have done the less conspicuous but not less necessary work of "holding up the hands" of the Moseses with whom they had united their lives. These have constituted the bulk of this class. Unostentatious lives, "peaceable and quiet lives in all godliness and honesty," have been theirs. Now

and then, one departs to the better land. Some loving hand draws a brief portrait, and her memory is left with her household and a few intimate friends. There it will be cherished, and “oft at evening hour” some eyes will moisten and some hearts ache with a melancholy heaviness, as something recalls the image of the vanished face, the touch of the vanished hand. What these women have been to their husbands none will ever know but those who have “loved and lost.” With words of cheer, born of the faith and patience “that inherit the promises,” they have strengthened the fainting hearts of the itinerants who have been ready, like Elijah, to die because they were not better than their fathers, and saw no signs of redemption of the Lord’s heritage. With wonderful ingenuity, they have supplied the lack of service of an unappreciative Church, toiling night and day to make a small allowance support a large family; and, meantime, not forgetful of the poor, and ready for every good word and work. With a gracious affability, worthy of a queen, they welcome all sorts of visitors, and try to make all alike feel at ease

and enjoy themselves under the friendly shelter of the parsonage roof. Despite a load of family cares, these ladies are oft from necessity the teachers of their own little ones, and add the labor of giving instruction to the drudgery of household work. Like the mother of John Wesley, it is they who guide the infant finger to spell out "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," making the Bible their text-book of letters and religion from the very first. Ah! who can tell the price of such women—these patient, believing, long-suffering, pious "yoke-fellows" of our itinerant oxen? Is it an evil or a good spirit who reminds me that all are not of this description?

I would fain throw a wide mantle of charity over the faults of husband and wife alike. But perhaps a slight delineation, by way of allusion, may be as a looking-glass to show errors that may yet be corrected.

Such a wife as I have depicted is not an extravagant woman, to run her husband into wasteful expenditures which embarrass him greatly and ultimately endanger his very salvation; nor a lover of gossip, having a tongue

(if not a finger) in all neighborhood scandal and petty quarrels; nor a cherisher of dubious acquaintances and fellowships involving her husband's good name if not her own; nor a "swift witness" against all whom she classes, justly or unjustly, as unfriendly to her husband or children, ready to denounce in language not measured and to condemn with judgment not righteous; nor a woman of coarse tastes and rough manners, assuming to claim in her husband's name what she thinks he is too mealy-mouthed to demand for her or himself, and in that style bullying stewards and other church officers; nor a proud, haughty, high-minded (in the offensive sense of Romans xii. 16) woman, who is always afraid that she may associate with some persons or families not her equals in refinement, education, or intelligence, and who repels the diffident by her loftiness, and the warm-hearted by her frigid demeanor. Better than any of these that an itinerant's wife should be an insignificant cipher, counting zero in life's great calculations, a sweet-faced simpleton, gentle as a pet dog, and useless as a canary that will not sing.

She will "break no hooks if she catch no fish."

I am proud to believe, from a wide acquaintance with them, that a nobler body of women than the wives of our Virginia itinerants would be hard to find. Not a few of them are rare combinations of the best qualities of mind and heart; some of them would adorn any sphere of life. Many are "patterns of good works;" many are, by their grace of manner, their charm of character, their tact and good taste, such aids to their husbands as make those better halves count for double, and more than double, what they would be alone.

I speak not of beauty of face or figure, of accomplishments, of distinguished connections. All these may be tributary to the holy uses of Christ's Church and ministers. Loveliness of person joined to loveliness of character, true refinement and the elegance inseparable from genuine cultivation, sanctified by true piety, are powerful instrumentalities for doing good. God bless our preachers and their families! God comfort the bereaved who in loneliness travel the road of

toil and self-denial once made bright by the presence of an “angel of the household!” The Lord strengthen the hearts of our true and faithful ones, who have “left all” for Jesus’ sake and their husbands!

No. 19.

THE OLD NORTH STATE.



N unexpected turn of events recently carried me out of my district and State, and left me for some days, including a Sunday, in North Carolina. I was once a citizen of that noble old State; many sweet and precious memories cling around those years: the vexations and misunderstandings of life, thank God, are measurably forgotten, and only a little sediment of disturbance marks their position on the chart of by-gone years. The good and the pleasant are more durable. They grapple to my heart-strings yet. Over the curve of the under-world into which have gone those distant years, when I was so much younger and fresher, when my children were little ones, and coming life seemed to offer many opportunities of happiness and usefulness, come up to me faint but soft murmurings of pleasant recollections. The friends of those days people once more the halls of memory (many of them, alas! are passed to

another life); I wander as of yore in the fields and woods; the ordinary routine is bright and busy, and public and extraordinary days are full of excitement. But it is “the clang of the wooden shoon,” in Molloy’s song.

And here I am, in another part of the State, far off from those pleasant walks of “lang syne.” And it does not look like the land of the holly and myrtle, the arbutus, the yellow jasmine, the saracenia, and pond-lily. The soil is red, the mud deep, and the hills swell and streams roll along more like my native Piedmont, Virginia. The air is softer, however, by far than that which is blowing from snow-touched mountains and along wind-shaken heights of that lovely region. The gardens will be some weeks ahead, and out-door life be much more practicable in the spring.

An ancient town, with its ample lots, its wide streets, and many elms, stretches around me. Gen. Jackson (Andrew, not Stonewall) once had a law-office here. I have seen the old building myself; but it was removed in 1876 to the Philadelphia “Centennial.” Not a great way off, that earlier “declaration of

independence" than Thomas Jefferson's was made; the descendants of a German and Scotch-Irish immigration many years ago are around, testifying by name and appearance and manners to their original derivation; it is not North-eastern, but South-western Carolina. Get upon this iron track that stretches away westward, and you will, within one hundred miles, be climbing the grades of that wonderful engineering which has pierced and crossed the Blue Ridge; you will be gazing upon the highest peaks this side of the Rocky Mountains, and viewing landscapes unsurpassed for beauty and grandeur.

Here are two mementos of heights yet beyond those, on the border of Tennessee, which have been given me: a beautiful cane of rhododendron (mountain laurel) and a quartz pebble, flattened and round and smooth, three inches wide, which was cut out of a deer's stomach, killed near a watering-place. Doubtless the animal swallowed it imbedded in a mass of the soft green moss they eat in hard weather. He "bit off more than he could chew," and so bolted his meal, and seemed to suffer no more from his indigesti-

ble food than the English sailor who, it is reported, “swallowed sixteen jack-knives.”

But I am wandering—not in a land of fable; except, it may be, as to those “jack-knives ;” for them I am not responsible; that case is in the medical reports.

I have not been long domiciled when I am visited by that excellent Christian gentleman Dr. Black, presiding elder of the district, and Brother Wheeler, preacher in charge, and booked for a sermon Sunday morning. At night I preach for my friend Dr. Rumple, of the Presbyterian church. The Methodists have enlarged and improved their church. They have a pipe organ, well played, and a good quartet choir, who sing well and lead the people in plain tunes for the regular hymns. But the congregation did not sing very much. I prefer good singing by a choir, however small, to bad singing by a congregation; the larger the worse, if the singing be bad. But we need not have either extreme. Our people are to blame when they do not study and try to sing well, and seek to be instructed and practice so as to swell the volume of singing in the church without

missing the time or uttering discord. No choir shall "do my singing," though I shall be very thankful to have the leading and guidance which a good one furnishes; and will be careful to follow them and not torture their souls by incorrect notes or untimely movements.

The Baptists have at length erected a church here; they are still feeble in numbers and financial ability. But they and the Methodists—the denominations which reach the masses—grow and spread, while the Episcopalians remain about the same, or die out in the rural districts, and the Presbyterians, once overwhelmingly predominant in this country, stand still, and though generally strong make no advance.

The railroads have changed the centers of population in this region somewhat. Where several meet population increases. Thus Greensboro has grown to six thousand perhaps, and Charlotte, which was smaller than Salisbury thirty-five years ago, has ten thousand, and is the liveliest town in the State. The mountain towns are growing—Morganton, Asheville, etc. A vast development has be-

gun, and in due time the mineral riches of the great Blue Ridge and Alleghany section will be fully opened, and its vast capabilities as a grazing, agricultural, and manufacturing region made known. It is no exaggeration to say that Piedmont and South-west Virginia, West Virginia, and Western North Carolina have enough in them to sustain and employ a population equal to that of Great Britain. A long time hence, when this scribe and his contemporaries are in their graves and forgotten, as great a transformation will have come over these sections as would be palpable to a hero of King's Mountain or Cowpens could he come up out of his grave and see and understand things of our day.

Gold mining has been carried on in Southwestern Carolina for many years; it has usually proved a losing business to the last holders. A very rich discovery has been lately made, it is said, near Salisbury; the owner is not working, but trying to sell, but capitalists are shy.

No. 20.

GLOOMY WEATHER.



T rains and it rains. Somewhere among the English-speaking people the expression obtains, "It rains cats and dogs." The precise origin of this is unknown to me; doubtless the meaning is a very unusual shower—as unusual as if it were "pitchforks," or the members of the animal family last named. But, however droll this phraseology, I am sure of this, that if it had ever rained "cats and dogs," they would have "descended" in the fallings of this "spell." In my district we have had varieties of thin snow, sleet, and thunder and lightning, but no "Tom" or "Bowser" has "come down," although a good many of both have probably "gone up," succumbing to the ills which cold and wet bring upon the feline and canine race.

Many have been the interruptions of divine service; few have been the full and crowded houses. Even in town there has been decline. Many appointments have fall-

en through, and the list of sermons preached has been considerably shorter than it was last year. More hours, however, for reading and thinking. Nature has felt the inclement weather in all the departments of growth and floral beauty. The gentle approaches of spring have been imperceptible. The imprudent bud or blossom that has ventured out to "breathe forth incense like a prayer" has had an untimely nipping; the green edgings and little patches under the fences and hedge-rows have been narrow and sometimes singed in appearance; the trees and fields have worn a wintry look, and preached sermons on death rather than resurrection. The unkept and unsheltered forest nurseries have furnished scarcely a blossom; an early and diminutive pansy, a dandelion here and there on warm slopes, has rewarded a patient search. Hyacinths and crocuses have bloomed in open yards, and jonquils and the like, but by much help and protection and somewhat scantily. I have been longing to get within reach of my favorite wild flowers—to tickle the hepatica leaves, and turn over the stems of trailing arbutus, and see if the adder's

tongue has shot up out of the ground and pierced the dead leaves through with the dart of his pointed leaf. But, perhaps, if allowed, I would have been searching, in this late season, in vain for bloom. Vegetation has been wearing Charles V.'s early motto, "*Non-dum.*"

These gloomy days—with the light of the sun darkened, and every thing dripping about us, confining us to our houses a great deal, and so narrowing the area of our activities and enjoyments—are they not symbolical of certain seasons of our religious life? Says the poet Longfellow:

Into each life some rain must fall;
Some days must be dark and dreary.

And if this be true as to the mixture of good and evil, of sorrow and joy, in common life, it is doubtless ordinarily true as to the light and shade of spiritual life. Some souls may attain a state of unbroken delight and satisfaction, but for the great majority there are decided fluctuations. I believe very decidedly that *all* may attain a serene and settled faith and love, ready for every trial and victorious over sin and the world, but with these

some days will be balmy as May and bright as June, and others cold and dark as December. Outward circumstances will change, and require adjustments of faith and hope and love and patience to meet them; and before these become habitual and settled the new aspect of affairs will be chilly and gloomy. "The clouds" will "return after the rain," a momentary glimpse of fairer sky be succeeded by thicker screens of vapor and heavier down-pourings.

The rainy season has its meteorological justification; it is necessary and in the end beneficial to climate and agriculture. And so of our spiritual dark days. They have their uses. Being such as we are, we need them. As nobody sighs for a country on earth where it never rains, but where sunshine is a perpetual burning glare, so nobody wants this life to be unalloyed—unless, indeed, the unbeliever in another life. The Christian is simply led by his saddened experiences to long and pray:

"Take me to Thee up on high,
Where winter and clouds are no more."

"There everlasting spring abides." It is the

only country that could stand that state of things. When we are gone to "the land of the leal," where sin is banished and God reigns in a kingdom that cannot be moved, we shall be able to do without the discipline of chastening and clouds and dark days. Till then, let it rain on according to His will who guides the clouds in the natural and religious atmosphere.

. . . Moist and heat and dry
Shall foster and mature the grain
For garners in the sky.

No. 21.

SYSTEMATIC MEN.

THE winter is past and gone; the time of flowers and song-birds is come. The gloomy weather has ceased; some weeks of comparative dryness and warmth have rejoiced the soul of the husbandmen and made the roads quite practicable, which had before been well-nigh impassable.

The energetic itinerants, baffled hitherto, but not defeated or discouraged, will begin afresh, and with good-will, and hopefulness, their partially suspended and oft interrupted work. Every church will put forth buds of promise, and all over the district there will be smiling faces and hopeful hearts.

I risk nothing in prophesying that a certain class of men among the preachers and church officers will at once take the start and keep it. These are the systematic men; the men who do not work at hap-hazard, but plan what they have to do, and habitually

keep an orderly account of all their transactions and the results of them.

Generally, the man of system manifests his propensity in every direction. He has lists and memorandum-book, and knows where every thing is and what everybody under his control is doing. I have often been half amused, half provoked, at the jumble which unsystematic men make of the materials of their labor. They lose an immense amount of time looking for things. Nothing is ever exactly at hand ; it has to be searched for just when required, and is hardly ever promptly found. Not so with the systematic man. He can put his finger on whatever he needs, at a moment's notice; has considered the matter in advance, planned how to manage it when the time should come, and is not bewildered or flurried by the demand. He does not always succeed to the full degree of his purposes and hopes; but he has some resource counted upon and laid by, and disappointment is never with him utterly blighting, nor failure overwhelming and complete. I have met with men that ran system to seed, and, like the tithers of "mint, anise,

cummin, and rue" in our Lord's day, made more of their tables of "small things" and their picayune lists and memoranda than of important events and momentous occasions. One of these fellows, with his inch-rule and petty measurements of flies' feet and moths' eyes, is a pest. But he is not so bad as a man that never has any thing in place, knows nothing with exactness, has no fixed arrangements, and catches up whatever comes nearest to him at the time of action.

Systematic men are a comfort to the presiding elder at Quarterly and District Conferences. They are in place, and the entries in reply to "Minute Questions" and the like, which depend on them, are made exhaustively and quickly. The bearing of their regular habits upon study and pastoral visiting must be evident to any reflecting mind. By means of these, a man of ordinary ability may far surpass in usefulness, and even in acceptableness, a brilliant but irregular workman. The simple element of reliability makes all the difference. It is also another illustration of the hare and tortoise race. When system is combined with great ener-

gy and uncommon gifts, the amount of work that can be put forth by a human being is utterly amazing. The last work, a posthumous one, of the late J. R. Green, author of the "History of the People of England," appears, from its preface, to have been wrought out by the dying struggles of a man whose systematic habits of study and work, by his wife's noble assistance, prevailed to produce one more monument of his historical genius, despite the prostration, pain, and nervousness of a fatal and rapidly progressing disease. Enthusiasm was a tremendous force in his case, but it is evident that it would have amounted to little but for long-formed habits of systematic collecting, noting, and digesting of the materials he would have to employ. Little can be done to cure elderly men of a want of system; it is like "putting new wine into old wine-skins;" they would not bear it. But the young man, especially the young preacher, the novice in our ministry, may hear a word of exhortation on the subject with profit. Perhaps he already has begun in the right way. Let nothing turn you out of it. Beware of contracting slov-

only and irregular habits as you grow older. Keep your books and papers in an orderly and careful manner. If you cannot "do every thing by rule," have a clear and well-digested system of doing, by which you will know very well, at the beginning of every day, what you are going to attempt, and how it is to be done. Do not despise small matters; keep an eye on details, and be ready to make use of them when necessary. Exactness and precision, when not unduly promoted to the place of even better things, are excellent, and often gain a victory where vagueness and uncertainty would amount to nothing. Some men have built a considerable reputation upon a high degree of these; and many a preacher has lost position and become a "wet log" because he was of no value except when discoursing of abstract questions and principles of the most general kind in the pulpit. He could not descend to statistics, collections, common-sense details; and was hedged out in all directions by the cry, "We want a practical and systematic preacher!"

No. 22.

MACHINERY IN THE CHURCH.

HE age is mechanical. Inventions are past numbering, and in nothing has the active Anglo-American mind been more restlessly and successfully employed than in the devising of means by which labor may be saved and the work of many men done by a few, and better done than ever. To some extent the same spirit has entered into ecclesiastical affairs, and there, too, "sought out many inventions." The homely machinery of our fathers has given place to "forty-horse power" agencies and boards. The horseback corps of Bishops, presiding elders, and circuit-riders, with an annually-appearing "book steward," and, after some time, the "college agent," here and there, has been succeeded by a "college" of Bishops, Book Agents, and Missionary Secretaries, and officers, and "boards," not innumerable by any means, but increasingly numerous.

Is it not possible that the matter is over-

done? Every thing at "head-quarters" is done by a "board," or its equivalent—which is all very well; but it seems to me that when in the Annual Conference, besides our finance board, our standing committees have been organized into "boards," and Sunday-schools and education, as well as missions and Church extension, must be put into "boards," the thing is getting rather stiff. The review of such subjects at the Annual Conference is necessarily brief and springing out of the occasion, and the attempt to impart a durability to these organizations by appointing them so as to *hold over* proved, in our Conference, a complete failure the very first year. But by *law* we have the name of "board" riveted upon what is in every respect a committee, and which was as serviceable by that form and name.

What *may* grow into a great mischief has been doubtless little considered in this matter. I refer to the *tendency* in all such organizations to take on more or less of the "close corporation" spirit. It is an easy growth in them to assume *entire and exclusive custody* of the subjects embraced in their charge, and

to work toward turning the Annual Conferences into mere instruments for *registering* their acts. This is increased by the management of our time in our annual session. When we have a "statistical Bishop," who requests preachers to read their reports made to the Joint Board of Finance and the Conference Secretary, and duly published *in extenso* in the Minutes (the readers of which are the only people who pay the slightest attention to them *elsewhere*), the time is so taken up with that dreary performance, and the vain attempts to *keep order* during an exercise in which nobody but the Bishop can *affect* to be interested, that, with the unavoidable routine business, the days slip away, and "the heel" of the session appears ere anybody outside of the numerous "boards" has considered or discussed any points not comparatively trivial. Then, when but a day or two remain to weigh and digest the information and suggested action upon the subjects of Finance, Sunday-schools, Missions, Publishing, and Education, communicated in the reports from boards and committees, things are driven ahead under whip and

spur, with the aid of a large body of dispirited preachers, worn out by lengths of nothings which have deployed before them in almost interminable succession day by day; and, as happened at one of our Conferences, a long report on one of the most important subjects, containing recommendation of very questionable action, is put upon its passage, without an explanation or a single effort to look at the difficulties involved. And when the President of the Conference is not an unconscious time-waster, the body itself allows the most important boards and committees to delay to the last moment. It would be well for every committee and board to report, unless on some small matter of detail, on *Monday*, and some on *Saturday*, that there may be *full consideration in Conference*. The contrary practice results in increasing restlessness on the part of boards at having their views objected to, and to criticisms *after Conference*, which generally lead to irritating controversies and prolonged misunderstandings. In a session of seven or eight days, *at least three or four* should be devoted to calm and thorough ventilation of these reports.

But some say, "Of what value is discussion? We do not need *talk*. The board considers the subject, and its action and report need no prolonged talk about the subject." Discussion need not be mere *talk*. In a deliberative body it should be short and direct. It is *comparison of many opinions* that settles the mind of such a body. And how oft it occurs that a paper, which seemed faultless and exact and well-conceived, is found to be very defective when some sharp-sighted member goes to searching it. Under his dissecting-knife, what looked sound enough shows some ugly spots. And again, a plausible objection is overthrown by discussion, and the approval of the paper, shaken at first, becomes clear and undoubted. Open and free discussion is fatal to the spirit of *dictation*—which insensibly forms in certain minds and around certain bodies—and widens the field of view for every member of the Conference, except in the case of one who is so self-conceited as to suppose that nothing can be added to his knowledge or his wisdom.

The increase of machinery, more especially apparent at our Annual Conferences, has

been progressively impairing the *devoutness* of those assemblies. It was no idle word when our fathers proposed to "do every thing as in the immediate presence of God." And the religious services were unusually fervent and edifying. At some of the earlier Conferences, attended by even so young a member as myself, there was a morning prayer-meeting of a half-hour or so on first meeting. Now there are anniversaries and meetings "in the interest of" this or that, until preaching, save on Sunday, "hides its diminished head" at all the chief churches. And the concourse of strangers, representing this "board" and that, men necessarily *full* of their particular business, gives a hue of *specialties* to our general proceedings, by which we approach nearer and nearer to the idea of a Baptist Association, and depart more and more from that of a Methodist Conference of traveling preachers.

But I have gossiped long enough on this head. This lovely morning, following three or four gloomy days, has made me garrulous like the birds, who are telling each other in tree and shrubbery what they think of mat-

ters and things. Specially is that fussy little rascal, the English sparrow, uttering his sharp chirp. He is a new "board" in the department of ornithology that is an invasion of old customs and a multiplier of mischief. Why, will you believe it, gentle reader, I saw the other day, in the Capitol Square at Richmond, that he had built a nest or two in Thomas Jefferson's vest-pocket, and had been trying to get inside of the roll of the Declaration of Independence? I would like his report to be discussed by a numerous conference of sparrow-hawks and butcher-birds.

No. 23.

MUSIC IN OLDEN DAYS.



ALKING the other day through the old "Methodist Cemetery," as it was called when I was a boy, which lies near the head of Fifth street, in Lynchburg, Va., I saw a marble slab erected to the memory of "Blind Billy," the negro fife-player, whom all older Lynchburgers recollect. What a train of thought started on sight of that simple inscription! The blind fifer, as I often saw him, rose to my inward sight marching on the street, or at the "general musters" of the country along the dusty country roads, between two drummers, one on each side, who, while sustaining with tremendous clatter the noisy accompaniment to Billy's ear-piercing instrument, served the purpose of guides to him also. Lost to all save the music which rushed in waves of rapture through his brain, his sightless eyes upturned and the face expressive of complete transport, he played for hours and marched and countermarched, or, when he halted,

beat time with his foot while the unsophisticated natives heard the "Soldier's Joy," "Gilderoy," or "White Cockade," "Barbara Allen," or "The Girl I Left Behind Me," played with a spirit and expression never excelled.. The sound of that fife seemed to get into the air and go all over the ground. It made itself part of those scenes—as unforgetable as the uniforms and horses of the militia regimental officers or the cake-carts and candy-stands. The last strains attended the setting sun, or perhaps, if Billy and his drum comrades remained over night, the plaintive melodies I shall presently allude to stole softly (though high and piercing) across "the dewy steeps of air" from the precincts of the village inn to the chambers of sentimental and solitary listeners. These tunes were oftenest heard, however, to perfection at night in Lynchburg itself. Somewhere on the street, at some shop where he was regarded as an acquisition, or feed to come regularly, he was standing at some aperture, and for love of music more than any other motive discoursing on his beloved fife strains "in sweetness to outlast the morn."

I remember particularly two—"Kathleen O'More" and "Wandering Willie." As rendered by Billy, these melodies were endowed with a matchless pathos. If you knew the poetry, your heart ached over "poor little Kathleen" and her heart-broken lover, and the red-breast was more sacred in your eyes, as in his, because it loved the church-yard and there "hopped lightly o'er Kathleen," the lovely little creature consecrated by an early death. I have never been able to find *in print* the melody of "Wandering Willie" he played. Where he got it of course I have no idea; he heard it first, probably, from some wandering musician, it may be, with bagpipe or fiddle. But it is lovelier and tenderer far and truer to the words than the airs I have seen in "Scotch songs" of various collections. I suspect it is older, and like the ballads of the "border" traveled to this side of the Atlantic by tradition. Had that wandering lover, afloat on the raging billows, heard Billy's melody and Burns's words with it, treason and faithlessness, if dawning there, would have fled from his heart, fiends exorcised by the power of

music; and he would have sailed back to "his Nannie" over miles of main and despite all the storms of an angry ocean. Across the gap of nearly forty years that song comes to my ear. It is a bright, soft night. The moon is full, and sheds its mild luster over pavements and piles of brick and stone. I am in bed, but not sleepy, though a more or less tired boy. For "mine ear" is "attentive" to Billy's fife. As thrilling as the notes of that other wonderful natural musician, the wood-thrush, the note trembles on the air. It is loud and distinct, yet not harsh or obtrusive. The *tempo* is instinctively well taken, the musician's soul is in it, and no money could buy such fidelity to the idea of the composer as Billy's love will furnish. As I lie awake and listening, imagination takes me captive. Common life drops out of sight. I feel every note, and wish he would play till day-break. As the pathos renews itself with the oft-repeated strain, growing tenderer and tenderer, mounting toward heaven in greater purity and power, I feel the tears starting to my eyes. Just then he stops, and like his brother musician of the wood—is gone. Un-

like the bird, he does not warble that tinkling, pathetic trill from some greater distance. His bed-time has come, or the shop is shut up, and Billy will soon be under the spell of death's brother—prophetic of that other stronger spell which holds him now in clay and silence. And, as it is now, I listen in vain, and retain only the memory of that matchless fife.

No. 24.

PROTRACTED MEETINGS.



HE season for these meetings draws nigh. The average Methodists think their Church is about ruined without a protracted meeting annually. They may have had excellent preaching, without exception, and a great deal of it statedly; the Sunday-school may be flourishing, and the general state of piety, judging by the lives and works of the people, encouraging; but still the successor of the old "two-days' meeting" must have his chance, and a week or more with "all-day service" must be spent in preaching to the unconverted. Much of this amounts to but little; there is "'twixt promise and performance rare proportion!" yet it is going to be done, and our object is not to prevent it, but to make some suggestions which may possibly improve the results.

The real success of a meeting depends much on the preaching; largely, doubtless, upon the prayers and fervent spirit of the

people, but in these the preaching is a large and influential factor. In what respects, then, would we seek to improve the preaching?

1. Has it not been *hortatory* to too large an extent? It is often said that people understand well enough; what they need is to be persuaded to act. But this is less true than we suppose. Many will not act because their ideas are confused. There is great need of instruction. The great doctrines of religion need to be expounded. The stock arguments against delay, the scriptural proof of God's readiness to save now, the sermons on quenching the Holy Spirit and sinning away grace, are somewhat stale and trite. But, handled with any vigor, the great fundamental doctrines of Justification, Regeneration, Repentance, Witness of the Spirit, Holiness, etc., can never become stale. Let us stir up the gift of God in us, and while we persuade and exhort men do it with the words of sound doctrine. Let the great numbers who attend go away wiser and more thoughtful. Do not be afraid that you will not create a sensation and have a great move.

Some of the grandest revivals of all times were generated in connection with powerful, thoughtful, reasoning preaching.

2. Has it not been *too general*? The partridge-hunter soon learns that he does little execution by firing loosely “into the covey.” He must single out the bird and *take aim* every time. Far or near, he will kill then. So indefinite talk, which spends itself upon general propositions vaguely applied, will not find a real mark. The idea is to make some hearer cry out, “*My* conscience felt and owned the guilt!” By close and searching application a general doctrine can be brought home. We must beware of having our congregation made up of Betty Raskellys (as Betty *was* at first) who will think we are speaking of “things that happened a long time ago, about people who lived a long time since, in a country a long way off.” Make them realize that you mean *them*—that you believe they are sinners and need to repent at once. Draw pictures from real life. Do not lampoon, but be pointed, direct, unflattering. Preach in reproof of sins that are committed and popular in your community. Stir up the whis-

ky-seller, the Sabbath-breaker, the drunkard, the cheat, the fornicator, the lazy man. Be prudent, but "cry aloud and spare not."

3. Have we not omitted to a hurtful extent the custom of our fathers, of *bringing in allusions to experience?* How interesting to all classes of people, to the unconverted often, are lively love-feasts or experience-meetings! It is because they are *concrete religion*; they are specimens of the *individual life*—the actual warfare between the flesh and the Spirit. It was a good armory from which to draw weapons in the olden time—the experience of the preachers themselves. Let us return somewhat to that method. Out of your own life and that of other men of God illustrate the abstract truths of vital religion. Let the people feel that it is a matter of common daily life about which we preach—something not far off as the Middle Ages and intangible as superstitious legends, but matter of actual trial and proof with us of to-day. Sermons will thus be fresher, simpler, and more effective. Moody and the other evangelists of our day employ this method. They tell what happened at such a place and time,

give names and dates and actual conversations. Methodist literature and biography are full of materials for this purpose; and despise not your own experience. An extract from it may be the smooth pebble from the brook that shall kill a Goliath.

A word about *singing*. To our ears the singing in our meetings often sounds *tame*. One rarely hears now—thanks to God for it!—the doggerel choruses that in so many places disgraced our singing and brought our intelligence into question. Moody and Sankey have done a great service in killing off these. May our ears never again be afflicted with “Hail, hail, hail!” or “Brethren, will you meet me?” or “I have a father (mother, brother, and innumerable relations) in the promised land!” nor have the strong, nervous lines of such a hymn as “Jesus, my all, to heaven is gone,” *dislocated* by intervening and uncongenial scraps, such as “I am bound for the land of Canaan!” But there is a tendency to *drag*, as if the pieces were over-familiar, or were sung without feeling or thought. Let us begin to revive the great Methodist revival hymns and the tunes with

them. Study anew that part of our hymn-book. The Methodists have always been a great *singing* people. Let us stand by our ancient colors in this respect, singing "with the spirit and with the understanding also."

No. 25.

THE DEATH OF THE OLD.



MORE than six months of the Conference year have passed, and so far only one of our preachers has fallen—that noble veteran, George W. Nolley, first on our list in length of service, and just on the verge of four-score. For a number of years past our annual losses have been of men past sixty. The year that slew Duncan and Hodges has had no fellow since that sad date. The blade of the Great Reaper lately grazed another of our older and most valued men, and made us hold our breath for days together till we heard the steps of the destroyer die away in the distance. And we have a list of aged men lingering among us yet, dear and honored, bound to us by the associations and labors of many years. The heats of summer, the malarial vapors of autumn, the chilling winds of incipient winter, are yet to be passed by them ere our next assemblage in Virginia's "Hill City." Will another of these faithful men of God, full of

years and labors, be taken from us? or will the old Ashland hero sleep alone as the harvest of death among us this year?

Such questions passing through my mind have recalled a passage, perhaps forgotten by its author in the distinguished and important work of his pen in later years, which accidentally fell under my eye some time since and was preserved. For beauty of thought and elegance of diction it is worthy of a place among gems of our language.

More than twenty years ago, in the obituary of an aged citizen, Dr. J. C. Southall (now of the *Central Presbyterian*), then an editor in Charlottesville, wrote as follows:

“The death of the young is perhaps the more startling; but, to the contemplative mind, the death of the aged, the disappearance of the ripened intelligence of almost a century, with all its manifold experience and treasures of memory, and in the present case that long life spanning like an arch two great historic epochs—this, perhaps, leaves a more solemn impression than when some spring-tide flower drops its bloom. That is the decay of some stately oak that has struck its

roots deep into the soil and thrown out noble and sheltering branches, identified with the landscape, associated with the life of many human beings."

The imagery of this extract is exceedingly fine. I have seen many a "spring-tide flower" drop its bloom. There is a species of bell, a delicate pink in color, low in growth, and abundant in flowers, which in late summer and early autumn often beautifies the shady or damp paths or borders of streams. Short-lived at best, it is especially so when culled. "A thing of beauty," indeed, frail and delicate, its fading and falling bloom is a fitting comparison for the youthful beauty, "the grace of the fashion" of which so often "perisheth" in human society.

A bed of crane's-bill filling a small cove under a bank, which I showed a friend in an afternoon's walk, was one of the loveliest sights of this late spring. But a little more than a week afterward no particle of color was there. Those lovely petals, outspread in one solid mass of simple but incomparable bloom, lay "withered and dead." Such sights are familiar to one whose native tastes

carry his feet among the haunts of the wild flowers. And hardly less familiar to us are the drooping and fading away of loveliness of person and rare endowments of mind and heart, fitted to charm every beholder.

There is no flock, however watched or tended,
But one dead lamb is there.

But I have seen “the decay of” few “stately oaks.” One is indelibly graven on my memory. It stood on the side of a beautiful stretch of level road, in a hilly region near the mountains. There was no other tree of great size along the road for a mile and a half. It was a huge white-oak, branching in every direction at ten or twelve feet from the ground, and spreading its lusty arms to a great distance. If not a “boundless contiguity of shade,” it was a delightful canopy for man and beast in the heat of summer; and the tired, dusty, and heated traveler halted beneath its welcome coolness and dense protection, and felt a bond of hearty sympathy with panting sheep or lolling cattle or stamping colts on the other side of the fence inside the inclosure. Spending many summers less than a mile off, I not only passed it in

frequent journeys, but on hot summer nights delighted to walk up to its foot and enjoy the night breeze while I peeped from beneath its extended arms at the stars in their silent march across the sky. Ofttimes I blessed the man that spared it from the original forest cleared away for a wide expanse; admired its lovely globular head and pale, smooth leaves, and in autumn its abundant "mast." An evil spirit entered into the owner of that land. He cut off every branch, making a large pile of fire-wood (doubtless excellent), and left the stump an unsightly column, like a sign-post. Nature struggled hard. Old as the tree must have been, it put out bunches of sprouts from the mangled stumps of its limbs. They took on some coarse but large leaves, and strove to grow and flourish as of yore. I could imagine the tree to be conscious, and that it felt like the shorn Samson when he awoke out of the fatal sleep, and said, "I will go out, as at other times before, and shake myself." But, as in his case, it was too late. When I last saw it the sprouts were withered, and the loosening bark and burned-like look of the cut ends

of boughs showed that Byron's words were fulfilled:

The massy trunk the ruin feels,
And never more a leaf reveals.

I had sometimes thought, with a saddening realization of the brevity of human life, that it would probably be still green and vigorous long after I had ceased to breathe, and shelter many a way-worn traveler or tired beast when I should be forgotten of men and my place know me no more. But I have lived to write its obituary. With a deep feeling of condemnation of the barbarian who destroyed it, of the vandalism that would not preserve such a feature of the rural landscape, such a glory of the way-side, I record its end. And doubtless Dr. Southall was right. The aged, and especially the aged good man, is like such an oak, and his death makes on "the contemplative mind" an impression as solemn and deep as that I experienced when last I rode along that way and remembered the tree of former years. Its short and disfigured trunk was like the fresh red grave of a patriarch, before grass or tombstone is there to break the dreariness of naked death.

The death of the young startles and touches as when a bloom of rare loveliness drops from the flower-stalk to lie irrecoverably tarnished and speedily decay and disappear. In poetry and fiction the death of the young has furnished a theme of irresistible pathos. But deeper feeling wakes in view of "the disappearance of a ripened intelligence." Whither gone and to what future destiny? Earthly hopes have been disappointed and have perished; the companions of youth and active life are long since gone; a new stage of life is ushered in on every side with actors unrecognized; customs and fashions are wonderfully transformed; there is no more a place here for the octogenarian. He sighs to be gone, and sees beckoning hands and hears voices calling him, out of the misty unknown. How thrilling the contemplation of a great and entire change to him, who carries into eternity the "manifold experience," the "treasured memories" of almost a century! Can we bury him, or think of him when we see his vacant chair, as of an infant of days, or even as of the youthful maiden dying at "sweet sixteen?"

No. 26.

THE RED SUNSETS.

GE are having a repetition of this remarkable phenomenon of last year. A red sunset! Why, that is nothing strange or unusual. Certainly not, a sunset of brilliant coloring and clouds touched with red when the sunlight is utterly gone. Familiar prophecy of what we have had quite enough of this year—dry weather! But coloring so red, so deep, so vivid, so intense, and so many sunsets of this kind, day after day, certainly these are not common. These years, 1883 and 1884, will be unusual, I think, for that. The philosophers made no satisfactory explanation or discovery about them last fall. One astronomer saw in his telescope, when directed at twilight near the point of sunsetting, a flight of multitudinous telescopic meteors. It was conjectured that such a stream of them might somehow color the sunsets after this unusual fashion. Possibly; but all the meteors or shooting-stars shine with a white light. They

flash across the vault of heaven, leaving streaks of yellow-whitish color similar to the gleams of lightning in a thunder-storm. I never detected in one the violet tint that one sometimes perceives in lightning. They give not the faintest hint of red in any conceivable shade. Whatever their cause, our autumn sky has glorified itself again with these surpassingly beautiful sunset hues. The parched ground and dwindling water-courses, the scorched and dry herbage and the dusty plains, are depressing; but who can behold these gorgeous emblazonings of the western heavens without emotion, without an exalting, thrilling sensation? I saw one such sunset under touching and suggestive circumstances, a few days ago. A railroad train was carrying me along in view of some regions connected with my ministerial labors a good many years ago. I had not visited the place for a long time, nor indeed had but once been in sight of it. The village rose on my sight, distinct, but across a wide valley, and made a little gloomy by the approaching evening shades. The sense of time, long-past events, quickened and in-

creased a melancholy association of ideas otherwise already in my mind. When I first knew the place I became acquainted with a married couple, wedded but little longer than myself and wife. We were their guests, and a friendship began which was destined to become stronger and more intimate in later years. The young wife, not a mere girl, was lovely in person and character, and the center of life in her sweet home in that ancient village. Years passed, the war following closely those pleasant days; we met again in another place, and renewed the old ties of acquaintance and friendship. In each family there were children growing up, and by that fair mother's side grew a lovely girl, destined to greater beauty than the mother's, and gifted with uncommon powers of fascination. The mother's health had long been threatened, and seemed more fragile just when the daughter had bloomed into full maturity of youthful loveliness, the attraction in every assembly, the cynosure of every admiring eye. Alas! the arrow which had fatally wounded the mother passed unsuspected through the daughter's heart also.

Quickly, almost without warning, the deadly symptoms developed, progressed without arrest, and in less than a year she was gone. Strangely enough, the peril of her loved one seemed to act as a temporary cure of the mother. She appeared to be better, underwent without failing all the fatigue and misery of that long watching and waiting for death. But, when her darling was laid in the grave, she seemed no longer capable of resisting her enemy's approach, and, sinking steadily, in the course of two years lay by the side of her child, her grave by the side of that which had swallowed up beauty and grace and hope. The two graves were at that old village across the valley. I could not see them, but I knew they were there; I felt their presence. In the declining light of day the landscape was mournful; it seemed to chant the dirge over buried love and joy and hope. My heart sunk with the feeling that this is the end of all. No one can stay the march of that dread procession by which life and all it holds dear here sweep into the remorseless abyss of the tomb. "What after death for me remains?" Just then the train,

sweeping onward toward the east, brought the receding village and the crest of hills on which it stood against the sunset point, and the matchless hues of the “red sunset” rose above its trees and houses, above the spot where the grave-yard was. Next, above the ground, was a very deep red, as of blood wrung from crushed and sorrowing hearts, and upward, suffusing the higher strata of air, was a delicate and indescribably beautiful rose and violet tint intermingled, blending with the white rays of the twilight. It rushed upon my heart that it is a natural prophecy of the resurrection. I felt the support, the comfort of the hope of Christianity. The words of Beattie were echoed in my soul :

See Truth, Love, and Mercy in triumph descending,
And Nature all glowing in Eden’s first bloom;
On the cold cheek of Death smiles and roses are blending,
And Beauty immortal awakes from the tomb.

The night fell around me in thicker, darker folds; but there were light and peace in my heart. Death had spoken in solemn tones; but Nature, clad in robes of light and loveliness, had proclaimed the gospel of immortality and salvation.

No. 27.

“CUSTER’S LAST CHARGE.”



OME weeks ago I went with a friend to look at this painting, the work of the Virginia artist, Mr. Elder. It was about to be sent North for exhibition among Custer's own people, and probably for sale where money is more abundant among the patrons of art. I say "Custer's own people," not because I am disposed to admit, after twenty years' peace and quietness, that the Virginians are not "citizens of the United States" as much as they were in 1860, nor because I do not claim our share of the glory won by the deeds of any brave and gallant soldier of the United States army. No one appreciated Custer's intrepidity and dash more than the men who fought him at Trevilian's and in the Valley. But Northern people are his people by blood and State lines, and by full alliance and sympathy in the civil war. And they should feel a deeper interest than we in his fame. But I am glad that a Virginia painter has placed

on canvas the last sad scene in his career, and immortalized, as I trust, that chivalric and desperate charge.

It is a picture that thrills the beholder. You are transported into the midst of that wild Western landscape and that mortal struggle with overwhelming numbers of savage foes. The artist has selected, with skill, the features of the combat which he has chosen to occupy the foreground. In the center, the United States cavalry come like a storm-cloud, Custer leading on a steed flying like the wind, while his upraised saber hewing his way has for the time cleared the front. Before him the bugler lies prostrate, his bugle yet clasped in his dead hand. Several troopers, wounded more or less desperately, perhaps in the previous hours of the fight, are on the ground almost under his feet. One of them has raised himself on his elbow, and done his last service by shooting through the heart an Indian chief on foot immediately before Custer, and about to close upon him with a huge hunting-knife open and uplifted. It may be he had approached to scalp the soldier, who shot him

when the charge was made. At any rate, he is finished! His left-hand thrown up in mortal agony, his features struck with death, his mighty figure falling backward, proclaim the soldier’s deadly aim. He reminds me of a dying poacher, shot by the pursuers, and falling from a crossing-log with his load of chamois fastened to his shoulders, which I saw once in a piece of Tyrolean or German wood-carving. It was marvelous to me to see produced in wood those expressions of despair and mortal hurt. The same are here in this Indian. But somewhat farther to the left a yet more striking chief has drawn a bow, with arrow to the head, and is aiming directly at the great cavalry leader. As he is shooting by like a bolt from the skies, and his saber is about to descend upon the head of the chief who bars his passage, and who is just then shot by the prostrate cavalryman, he is in deadly peril from the shaft of the picturesque and athletic son of the forest. Beyond this Indian another is falling a victim to the revolver of a trooper charging not far behind his leader; but none is able to send a shot, where just then it seems most

needed, at the owner of that deadly bow. To the right, in front, are savages skulking behind dead horses, with arms in their hands, and on the extreme right, starting from the ground and ravines are scores of the enemy, rushing forward, in all sorts of attitudes, and firing upon the charging column. The effect of their fire is seen in the reeling forms of horsemen behind the doomed General. The picture, in the few figures seen on the left, makes suggestion of the same movement from that direction to defeat this desperate effort to cut through. As yet the fatal moment has not arrived. The fatal arrow has not left the string, nor any shot been fired to bring down that imposing form in the foreground. The horse, with extended nostrils, and feet that paw the air in flying leaps, is fleeter than death, and on his back sits superbly poised, in hunting-shirt costume, with grim determination, and tensely excited will and courage written on every feature, the hero of so many contests with greater foemen, about to fall by mere dint of numbers and overwhelming advantages of position and knowledge of the ground. He rides to his

doom, as befits such a man, taking the last desperate chance. If his command can be rescued by desperate valor, it shall be. Woe to the enemy upon whom he charges while life yet animates that gallant heart and empowers that sinewy arm !

The coloring and perspective are good. I presume the artist made special study, it may be by personal visit, of the very ground of the catastrophe. To one who has seen pictures drawn from nature of that region in Dakota, and the other Territories of the North-west, there is truth to nature in every trait. The plains and ravines of that home of the bison and red man, where Custer and his men perished, will always have on that account a more tragic interest.

I trust that the last of such encounters as this has taken place. Until the eating tooth of time has devoured the race of Indians, or the happier food of civilization has assimilated them to such conformity with the dominant race in habits and manners as will remove forever all occasions of conflict, I pray that no more blood of either may be shed in such war. I confess to have felt a pitying

admiration of even "Captain Jack" and "Sitting Bull," still more of "Chief Joseph," a far nobler and better spirit, not stained, as the others, with treachery and murder. In the remote obscurity of ages without annals is the origin of these people. Their ancestors may have been on a rude scale and with unmerciful power to the races of "Mound-builders," who once peopled the West, what the English and Anglo-American have been to them. Providence, I am certain, has done them no injustice. But may the last days of their existence be peaceful and bloodless; may no "Logan" of the latter times recite in pathetic speech the extermination of his kinsmen by rifle and revolver; and may the Indian of the closing years of the nineteenth century be better represented by Checote than by Sitting Bull!

No. 28.

ICE-MAKING.

AYS a recent writer: "Of all the projects that have excited the ridicule of the unimaginative of times gone by, perhaps none has appeared more exceedingly funny and chimerical than that of producing at will, by mechanism operated by heat, a freezing cold, and that without the use of ice or any previously congealed substance, and without regard to atmospheric temperature." In the city of Richmond there is a low brick building, on the western end of Canal street, upon which "the midsummer sun" does not shine "dim," but in full-orbed meridian splendor and power, out of which project pipes that by their hissing emission of steam give token more of a saw-mill than any thing else. The buzz of the saw, however, and harsh rending of plank do not issue from its peaceful interior. "Positively no admittance except on business" warns off the curious, and except an occasional workman going in and out, and

the sallying forth of red-painted ice-carts, there is nothing to indicate that there is any thing particular going on, or the kind of business there transacted.

I am told, for I have never been in it, that this is where ice is made artificially "by a mechanism operated by heat." "Without regard to atmospheric temperature," without use of any "previously congealed substance," in sultry, sweltering August, in mild, non-freezing winters, in Indian summer, and balmy spring, in the day-time, and at "three o'clock P.M." (the hottest part of hot days), they go on quietly making out "of James River water" ice, that never saw a pond or cool, sylvan retreat, which does not come from the Kennebec or anywhere else remote and nearer to the North Pole, but out of the laboratory of "fair science," which so far from frowning on its "humble birth" in that unpretending building, rejoices over its formation as one of its latest and greatest triumphs. And they sell it as cheaply as other ice. I do not know what particular process is used at this ice-factory. I suppose little can be seen by inspection, and one must be

somewhat acquainted with recent chemistry to appreciate what he can see. Some of the readers of the *Advocate* may, however, like to know something in general of the process of ice-making by artificial means; and, for their benefit, I make use of an article in the October number of the *Popular Science Monthly*, by Guy B. Seely, on the latest discovery in this direction, that of a Frenchman, now dead, Du Motay. The quotation at the beginning of this article is from Mr. Seely. The basis, he tells us, of the principal systems has been "the volatilization of a liquid *in vacuo* by means of a gas-pump." Ether and ammonia have been the substances experimented with chiefly. "The object sought has been the most economical method of employing those substances that are capable of producing the greatest degree of cold" (by volatilization). "But a difficulty is encountered in the high pressures of the gases produced in the pump:" the pressure increasing directly as the cold-producing power. The "obvious drawbacks" of such pressure are liability to explosion, inflammability, rapid wear and tear of the machinery, etc. Du

Motay "sought to combine two or more liquids which should have the property, in combination, of mutually neutralizing the defective features they exhibited when used separately." He employed ether and sulphurous acid. "The inflammability of the ether was nullified by the sulphurous acid; a perfect lubricant was obtained, and the substance had no corrosive action on the metals employed." But, above all, the ether absorbs a large part of the gas of the acid, and "reduces the mechanical problem to that of liquefying a gas having a pressure not approximating that of sulphurous acid, viz., fifty to eighty pounds or more per square inch, but barely more than that of ether itself, viz., twenty pounds." In other words, "the ether is found to have accomplished the greater part of the work, and a law of nature governing the action of certain chemicals in combination is availed of to reduce the mechanical labor of liquefaction to a minimum." It is this "mechanical labor" which requires a steam-engine or "mechanism operated by heat" to make cold. The gas produced by the volatilizing pump

worked by steam must be compressed by the machinery until it becomes a liquid again, that it may be available for further employment and be disposed of readily and profitably. Mr. Seely describes the process as follows: "The freezing agent, ethylo-sulphurous dioxide, or glycerine and ammonia, or whatever be the compound employed, is placed within the 'refrigerator,' which consists of tubular coils immersed in an uncongealable mixture. A double-acting vacuum-pump volatilizes the agent in the refrigerator coils, and this is attended with the development of an intense cold which is communicated to the surrounding mixture, and the latter, by means of a circulating pump, is made to flow through a suitable tank containing vessels of water to be frozen. . . . The discharge pipe of the circulating pump communicates with a condenser," which receives the volatilized liquid, and where the gas is liquefied again and ultimately restored to the refrigerator "to be again volatilized," the waste being small, as of steam in low-pressure engines. "The time consumed in the process of freezing the

water-cans ranges from twenty-four to thirty-six hours," the insulation of the tanks being more or less perfect in different mechanisms, and causing delay when not perfect. I hope these extracts are intelligible enough to the ordinary reader to prevent his being as vague in his notions of ice-making as he probably is of the Bain printing telegraph.

This artificial manufacture of ice is a great boon to hot regions and to us of temperate regions in mild winters; and as cold is manufactured, the process can be applied, and has been, to arrangements for cooling buildings in intensely hot weather. That will probably always be a luxury, whereas the ice is now very nearly a necessity of life, and is placed in reach of very poor people.

My readers will permit a presiding elder to say that there is no need for a process of artificial ice-making in the churches. The natural production there is at present, like the condition of the iron furnaces and cotton factories, a case of over-production. The demand is fully met. We need heating, and not freezing; seventy-five degrees above, and not ten below, zero.

Come, Holy Dove, from the heavenly hill,
And warm our frozen hearts.

O for men “fervent in spirit, serving the Lord!” We have a great many who are “not slothful in business.” But in spiritual affections, religious activities, devout fervor, they are sadly deficient. Their spirits have got into the tanks of the ice-factory owned by Messrs. World, Flesh & Devil. May they have an explosion in that factory that will shatter the refrigerator and lay waste the gas-pump!

No. 29.

SORROWFUL HGLIDAYS.

GE rejoice to know that the time-honored seasons draw nigh in which custom and associations place happy greetings and social festivity. No churlish nature, in most of us, repels their bright approach. Certainly none in me stands guard to keep off these gladsome days. I am delighted to witness the gambols and frolicsome glee of children—the bright, hopeful talk and sports of young people, free of care and buoyant with the wine of healthy life in their veins, charm me, and almost make me wish myself young again. I never was given to unseemly dissipation, and do not admire the relish that some grown folks have for gayety and folly at the holidays, verging on, if not reaching into, drunkenness and the orgies of sensualism and utter ungodliness. Why should a rational being, because it is Christmas, forget God and eternity and make himself a dog or a brute over eggnog, oyster-suppers,

and riotous living generally? Why should he forsake home-life and innocent pleasures and spend the small hours of night at some club-house or loose-living man's room, and drink of the cess-pools of dissipation? "From all such withdraw thyself." But the pleasant Christmas dinner, the New-year reunions, uncursed by fashion and intemperance—the holiday enjoyments at once intellectual and elevating, the music, the reading, the social converse, the pure pleasures, the temporary laying aside of business cares, severe study, or labor—who was ever the worse for these? Pleasant recollections of them come across my heart-strings, and make music like the breathings of the zephyrs upon the *Æolian* harp. I see the Christmas-trees loaded and waiting at midnight for the little ones asleep in their cribs, whose chirping at awaking will rival the birds of spring; I hear the tones of voices long silent, the strains of music from hands now cold in death; "the light of other days" breaks in upon my soul, and I thank God for past joys that have left no sting, for "days that are no more," but are unregretted and unforgotten.

Sometimes a shadow falls athwart our holidays, a shadow of sickness, bereavement, or some special loss or calamity. Such was my case this year. While people greeted each other and the season with gladness, while bells and merriment, and the evergreens and the carols, and the full tables and the crowded parlors, expressed the welcome of Christmas, I lay helpless well-nigh, unable to stand, and without movement save under the penalty of pain; I, who have known so little of serious sickness, have spent so little time in bed save to sleep, and that soundly; I, who have been such a pedestrian, have so loved to walk and rejoiced in my power to propel myself over hill and dale, if not to "paddle my own canoe," to climb mountains, and make long journeys. Happily, I could read, and had something to read; but, with all reliefs obtainable, how irksome the days of confinement, the sense of disability, the monotony of a sick-bed life! How welcome the symptoms of approaching cure, the ability to "rise up and walk," the clothing once more resumed, the breath of out-doors, the locomotion, though at first slow and cramped!

But Sorrow, grave brother of Pain, greeted me also. He came just before the new year. And as the light of that day broke, with so much of hope and gladness and joyful expectation to many, it fell on me at the death-bed of a dear and treasured loved one. The bright, kind, tender eyes, full of sympathy and charity, were closed to be opened no more; the heaving breast still labored with the last efforts of dissolving nature, but the generous heart, so true, so high-toned, so unselfish, was soon to be still; the hands, so soft in their touch, so skillful, so wonderfully ready in emergencies of life and death, were lying still or twitching with the slight shivering, convulsive motion that seemed to shrink from the cold touch of Death, the enemy they had so often successfully resisted in others; the well-known features were settling into the calmness and unbroken repose of the last sleep. Two more days, winter days, short and cold, gloomy and withering in breath and aspect, were to be given of this “death in life;” but no glance of recognition, no voice of cordial, affectionate greeting, no call for any aid nor any polite ac-

knowledgment of any little service, should again give token of lingering on the shore of time. These had all gone out with the old year, dead in his time and lot. And then came the actual snapping of the links of life, attenuated to the last degree of thinness; the last moment, for which nothing seems altogether to prepare us, which has in it something of a surprise after all. A little gazing at the dead face, tender kisses upon the pale, cool brow; and after that—"earth to earth, ashes to ashes." We had tenderly followed him "to the last lonely point of earth;" we had laid his remains by the side of the graves of his children—the four girls, from a lovely babe to a beautiful young wife, who had preceded him in the course of thirty years; and that drama of life was over. Forty years of rare public usefulness, a record of not having lived in vain, and, thank God too, of at last casting a weary head with repentant tears upon the Redeemer's breast "without one plea" but his blood, and all of earth to him is gone, and he is "beyond the sun."

The new year has been crowned by sorrow

The chaplet is cold as the ice which holds the frosty ground and crackles under the foot; it is also pure as the snow of winter; its lesson has no taint of evil or falsehood; it speaks of life eternal, of God, and the land where tears never fall. Listening to its teachings, self is withered and sin cast out.

No. 30.

A FUTURE STATE.



O most minds there are attractions in literature wherein the dread unknown, the mysterious and awful hereafter, is revealed. Be it that we know it is man's imagining, or dreaming, or surmising—still we are powerfully drawn to such pictures. From the plain but masterful allegory of John Bunyan, with its River of Death and Celestial City—the city of which distant views were had from the Delightable Mountains—to the "Physical Theory of a Future Life," by Isaac Taylor, and "Beyond the Gates," by Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, and "A Little Pilgrim," by Mrs. Olyphant; and, above all, the noble Christian poem of Bickersteth—"Yesterday, To-day, and Forever"—the theme finds new pens to treat it and an inexhaustible supply of readers. It is an involuntary tribute of human nature to the glory and importance of "the things that are not seen." It may be that curiosity, a prying into new and wonderful

matters, has part in this readiness to deal with such topics. But it is mainly a nobler feeling. It is a realization that surpassing interest attaches to the life to come which shall be eternal ; that its occupations and sources of enjoyment and satisfaction are of overwhelming significance to us who are so soon to enter upon them and rely upon them for our good. And it is a feeling after the loved and lost, as men sometimes in dreams and half-unconsciousness grope and grasp in the gloom of thought, if haply they may clasp to their aching and hungry hearts some long-absent dear one of the household group.

I have spent some leisure hours of recent days in reading one of the books before named, "Beyond the Gates." One of the evangelists lately laboring in Richmond, I have understood, warned his hearers against reading it; and it is certainly not evangelical in its stand-point: rather it is rationalistic, "Broad Church," semi-Unitarian. It would be a misfortune indeed to receive any intimation from it which is contradicted by Scripture. It more than hints, for example, at a second probation; it transfers to a high and

most honorable felicity persons who have simply exhibited a great natural virtue, such as the sacrifice of life to save men in peril; it distinguishes dimly, if at all, between the faith of assent and that of the heart "with" which "man believeth unto righteousness." It, nevertheless, has many valuable features, and may be read with profit by many persons. Perhaps it is like a razor, not to be intrusted to children, and in the paw of a monkey useful to cut his own throat or wound seriously another animal, but valuable to the adult being with hirsute possessions. It may be judiciously employed to deepen the sense of the eternal life, so dull in us after all, and so easily dulled yet more into blunt forgetfulness of every thing outside the domain of sense. It contains some good lessons, impressively taught. The value of personal holiness is presented in a strong light; the love and sympathy of our Lord are beautifully exhibited—a poor, unhappy girl, who had none of her own family and kindred in the world of glory to welcome her, tells that she was met first by the Master himself, and greeted and protectingly ush-

ered into its amazing and transcendent happiness; there are some ingenious and effective touches concerning devoutness, submission to the Divine will, Providence, etc. I am glad I read it; I think I have kept the wheat and let the chaff go.

Nothing has ever impressed me more deeply than the first book of “Yesterday, To-day, and Forever”—the Death of the Seer and his Descent into Hades. That brings home death and eternity very vividly to a soul yet in the flesh. But I have no faith in the premillennialism of the book, which is yet one of its most conspicuous features. Men like Bickersteth and Ryle cannot write without saying all they mean and know. So, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps is earnest and outspoken; error with her is deeper and more injurious, but she is a disciple of our Lord, too; she loves him in sincerity. Many a Christian soul will enter into this extract, with which I close:

“For I knew as I sat in that solemn hour, with my face to the sea and my soul with him, while sweeter than any song of all the waves of heaven or earth to sea-lovers,

sounded his voice who did commune with me—verily I knew, for then and forever, that earth had been a void to me because I had him not, and that heaven could be no heaven to me without him. All which I had known of earthly love; all that I had missed; the dreams from which I had been startled; the hopes that had evaded me; the patience which comes from knowing that one may not even try not to be misunderstood; the struggle to keep a solitary heart sweet; the anticipation of desolate age which casts its shadow backward upon the dial of middle life; the paralysis of feeling which creeps on with its disuse; the distrust of one's atrophied faculties of loving; the sluggish wonder if one is ceasing to be lovable; the growing difficulty of explaining one's self when it is necessary, because no one being more than any other cares for the explanation; the things which a lonely life converts into silence that cannot be broken, swept upon me like rapids, as turning to look into his dazzling face, I said: ‘This—all this—he understands.’”

No. 31.

HOLLYWOOD CEMETERY.



“ARK! from the tombs a doleful sound!” is an exclamation which expresses with many persons the only feelings or sentiments connected in their minds with cemeteries. They hate with a deadly hatred allusions to death and the grave, and, if they could, would banish all recurrences of such disagreeable topics. But mortality is too vast and fresh a subject to be banished by a volition. It intrudes upon our thoughts; its sad and gloomy accessories force themselves upon our sight. “Avaunt!” we may exclaim, but the gloomy figure will not disappear. Door-bells or handles muffled with crape, tolling bells, slowly nodding hearses, freshly dug earth in ominous-looking mounds, black garments and sad countenances, desolate homes and painful vacancies in family circles, are in our sight or smiting our ears; and in the vicinity of our large towns the “cities of the dead” enlarge their borders continually to remind us

unceasingly of “the inevitable hour” which awaits us all.

In the first series of these Recreations I wrote of the desirableness of cemeteries at all our country churches. My thoughts today are running on grave-yards and the tombs, but not with that particular application, nor with the gloomy and doleful associations of unbelief and worldliness.

The celebrated cemetery of Hollywood—lovely indeed in natural situation and adornment, and improved to a considerable degree by well-directed art—is within easy reach of a walker of moderate powers, and very often attracts my wandering footsteps. Alike in cold weather and in warm—most of all in the bright soft days of our fall season, dreamy and sweet—I find its secluded walks and vales a pleasant resort. The beauty of nature pleases the eye, the general aspect of the place and its associations soothe restlessness, and in many ways wholesome lessons, not always sad nor ever very depressing, suggest themselves.

I am drawn to it by the resting-places of that mortal part which was once inhabited

by many of my dear friends. The little spot they themselves do not occupy. That mound of earth does not cover James A. Duncan, nor that grass-covered grave hide from sight the venerable and beloved George W. Langhorne. But they are the places of earth which hold the bodies once glorified by the presence of the spiritual intelligences we knew and loved, marred and decaying under the power of the grave now, but some day to be "raised in power" and reanimated by those intelligences. Sacred and dear, then, to sight and memory those hallowed spots—not to be avoided and glanced at with gloom and doubting fear and horror; but tenderly visited from time to time, helping us to think lovingly and with hope and Christian joy of them and their faith and love in Christ Jesus.

It is a round of visits—sometimes shorter, sometimes longer, always sweetly consoling, with a subdued, partially melancholy satisfaction—that I pay when I take my walk through the cemetery. The number of friends to be called on enlarges steadily even here, far away from the scenes and friendships of my early life. Several have been

added of late. Brother ministers, fathers in Christ, some of whom I listened to and knew in my youth, and younger men, "mine equals and acquaintance," are here. I lovingly salute them all, and linger near some of them with deeper affection. Faithful friends are here too, and some special cases—former pupils—upon whose early graves the tears of their old teacher have fallen. Green be the grass and sweet the flowers that cover their dust! Beneath that mound is stilled the heart that once beat high with love and hope and trust and all sweet affections. I will come time and again to look upon it, and revive the thoughts of that faithful friendship which was unchanged and undimmed "even unto death." It must be fresh and strong and pure in heaven, though its ministries on earth have ceased, or, if they reach me now, are bestowed upon an unconscious object.

At least eight of the deceased ministers of our Conference are buried at Hollywood—over four of whom monuments are erected. A minister somewhat distinguished, of another Conference, is also interred here—the

Rev. M. M. Henkle, D.D., of the Tennessee Conference. He died during the war, in 1864, and, I think, in a hospital while acting as chaplain. A head-board of plain wood, near the splendid Masonic monument of Dr. Dove, marks the resting-place of this man of God. Its inscription is fading, and the board itself must be near to utter decay. Perhaps we have waited long enough for his brethren to erect something more durable—let us in Virginia put a simple head-stone at the grave of a holy and useful man of no common order. The soil of the Old Dominion holds his bones—let her Methodist sons mark his grave.

No. 32.

MONUMENTS IN HOLLYWOOD.

MY last paper referred to the natural beauty of Hollywood. It is indeed "beautiful for situation," and its natural advantages have been availed of till, from the ivy-covered lodge-gates onward to the new portion of the cemetery, every aspect of the vales and slopes and brooks appeals to the sense of beauty in every visitor. The natural growth of holly, cypress, sweet-gum, and oak receives a large accession, not out of proportion, however, of trees and shrubs not indigenous, such as magnolias and all kinds of evergreens. Flowering shrubs and plants are abundant, and in spring and summer "all looks flowery" and "sweet," with just enough that might be called "wild" to charm.

The enlargement of the cemetery, made these latter years, is nearly destitute of trees. It lies high and dry, however, with a slight undulation, and atones for its bareness by the surpassingly delightful view of the river

scenery—the finest portion of “the Falls” being just opposite, as well as Bellisle. The finest monument in Hollywood, that of the late Charles Talbott, is in this part, and, together with the granite columns in honor of Drs. Plumer and Jeter, may be seen from almost all points along the southern bank of the James. A liberal and judicious system of planting will soon leave little to be desired here.

As many of my readers may never see Hollywood, some account of its monuments may not be uninteresting.

On the loftiest point, near the edge of the old cemetery, and rather overhanging the river and canal, just above the old pump-house of the City Water-works, stands the modest mausoleum within whose open-work may be seen the granite sarcophagus inclosing the coffin of James Monroe, President of the United States from 1817 to 1825. Including the recently inaugurated President Cleveland, twenty-two men have held this high office for whole terms or parts thereof. Only four remain alive, and one of these (Gen. U. S. Grant) is probably on his death-

bed.* Three died on the 4th of July (Independence day), and President Monroe was one of these. A short inscription, on a copper-plate, says the remains of this "good and honored son" of Virginia were, by order of the General Assembly, removed from New York, where he died and was at first buried, to Hollywood July 5, 1858; so they will have slept this summer as long in the soil of Virginia as they did in that of "the Empire State."

Mr. Monroe is eclipsed in history by the brighter names of his predecessors, Washington, Jefferson, and Madison; but he was the central figure of a peaceful era, and had no opposition to his election for either term, which fortune has fallen to nobody since, as it did to none before except Washington.

In the circle surrounding the mausoleum, in which are some striking monuments and names of distinction and interest, is the grave, as yet unmarked, of John Tyler, another Virginia President of the United States. A

* Ex-President Grant died at Mt. McGregor, New York, July 23, 1885.

married daughter lies near him with a pretty carved head-stone. The father, a really great man in very many respects, partaker in the active polities of two historic epochs, was the first Vice-president who assumed the Presidency by reason of the death of his superior in office. Disappointing the party who elected him, he incurred their bitter dislike, and Henry Clay, their great leader, dubbed Mr. Tyler "His Accidency." But the fierce party passions of over thirty years ago are buried with the men. "Also their love and their hatred and their envy are now perished." The Legislature of Virginia should erect a monument over the grave of ex-President Tyler. He is one of her greatest men; his resting-place should be marked.

No other cemetery contains the graves of two Presidents, unless the two Adamses (John and John Quincy) are buried together at Quincy, Mass. The former died there, but the latter died in the House of Representatives at Washington in 1848. I do not remember, but probably his body was carried to Quincy. If so, that little old "town" and Richmond share the honor.

The tombs of other noted politicians arrest the eye as we wander over the grounds.

A square, low, granite tomb near the splendid monument of Mr. Talbott, in the new cemetery, bears this inscription: "Here lies John Randolph, of Roanoke. Born June 2, 1773. Died May 24, 1833. His remains were removed from Roanoke, Charlotte county, Va., to this spot December 13, 1879." Unique, sensitive, proud, with a tongue like a Damascene blade, this most aristocratic of republicans will be remembered as long as eccentric genius is unforgotten. Every thing he had possessed an elegance peculiar to the man. My old friend, John C. Blackwell—who, alas! is gone to the world of spirits also—had one of the many copies of the Greek Testament collected by Randolph. It was Griesbach's edition, in binding and finish was singularly nice and beautiful, and was bought at the sale at Roanoke after the death of the great commoner.

Near to President Monroe's tomb, yet not in the circle around it, is the monument of Hon. James A. Seddon, Representative in Congress for several terms from the Rich-

mond District, and one of Jefferson Davis's Secretaries of War during the four years' life of the Confederate States.

A massive granite monument is over a vault that will one day contain the dust of ex-Governor William Smith ("Extra Billy"), as it now does that of his wife and some of his sons. But the brave and strong old man, now an octogenarian, yet lingers on the shore of time. Letcher and Johnson, Wise and Floyd, Campbell and Gilmer, and others, are gone; the names of some of them "have been carved for many a year on the tomb;" but he is still among the younger men who knew the statesmen and politicians of *ante bellum*, who went through the war of secession, and see the twentieth year since peace was made at Appomattox.

Hollywood has several conspicuous monuments of ministers of the gospel; a number also sleep in graves not recognized by the general visitor. Besides those great lights of non-episcopal Churches already named (Jeter and Plumer), there are two Bishops interred here—Richard Channing Moore, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, predeces-

sor of the late Bishop Meade (he died in Lynchburg in 1841, having seen the ministers of his diocese increase from seven to ninety-five), and David S. Doggett, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, whose eloquent preaching and comparatively recent death are within the memory of all of us.

The great logician and debater of Southern Methodism, Wm. A. Smith, D.D., lies beneath a plain and rather small stone shaft erected by his brethren; while a tall and beautiful column of granite, with polished faces, marks the spot where sleeps the incomparable James A. Duncan. Two Presidents of Randolph-Macon are in Hollywood then, and inferior they were to none of that or any other college. The monument of Dr. Duncan and the brief but most appropriate inscriptions were described and given at length in the *Advocate* some years ago by Rev. W. E. Judkins.

A tall granite column is at the resting-place of Rev. Wm. H. Starr, a gentle, faithful, holy man, father of Dr. Starr of our Conference, and himself a member of it for many years.

Dr. William J. Hoge, brother of Moses D. Hoge, D.D., and father of Rev. Peyton H. Hoge, an eloquent man and much lamented, lies underneath a beautiful marble monument erected by friends in New York, Baltimore, and Petersburg, at which last place he died during the war.

Two other graves of ministers are marked —that of N. W. Wilson, D.D., of the Baptist Church, who fell a victim in New Orleans to the yellow fever of 1878, and that of the venerable Dr. Anderson Wade, of the Episcopal Church, long a resident in Charles City.

Monuments very similar to Dr. Duncan's are in the new cemetery at the graves of Dr. W. S. Plumer and Dr. J. B. Jeter, the great Presbyterian and Baptist preachers, whose works and fame are coëxtensive with the bounds of their respective Churches. By a remarkable coincidence these great men were born in the same year and month (July, 1802), died in the same year (1880), the one in February, the other in October, and sleep near each other in the same cemetery, the burying-place of the city where each achieved

great fame and left an indelible impress. The somewhat copious inscriptions on both monuments are excellent compositions; that on Dr. Plumer's the better, I think—sententious and appropriate, scriptural and elegant. That is lofty eulogium which declares that he was “a pastor, like the Good Shepherd, leading the flock beside the still waters, carrying the lambs in his bosom; a preacher, eloquent, instructive, persuasive, scriptural, wise to win souls, knowing only Christ and him crucified.” The description of his personal appearance and traits is graphic: “A man of majestic form and patriarchal manners, perfect integrity, apostolic fervor, truest friendship.” In both these saints was fulfilled that scripture which says, “With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation.” “Nevertheless, man being in [even such] honor abideth not.” “Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live forever?”

But I find my space giving out long before my subject, and must reserve further descriptions for another time.

No. 33.

MONUMENTS IN HOLLYWOOD (CONTINUED).

F literary men there are some examples—notably, John R. Thompson, long the editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, whose tasteful monument, “erected by his Northern and Southern friends,” says he was “the graceful poet, the brilliant writer, the steadfast friend, the loyal Virginian, the earnest and consistent Christian.” John Hampden Chamberlayne’s simple granite head-stone is on the main “West Vale Avenue;” his brother-in-law, Dr. George W. Bagby (“O rare Ben Jonson!”), sleeps in Shockoe Hill Cemetery. A chaste, grave, and now somewhat old-looking monument of brown-stone covers the dust of Wm. Maxwell, Esq., State Librarian (if I mistake not) in his time, and well known for years as a scholarly lawyer, “a promoter of education.” In the circle near President Monroe is the monument of Matthew Fontaine Maury, the great author of the “Physical Geography of the Sea” and of the world-famous “Winds

and Currents Charts," by which long voyages, like those to California and Australia, were shortened one-third, and the commerce of Great Britain alone estimated by a writer in one of the quarterlies to have been saved £10,000,000 per year. He founded the Naval Observatory at Georgetown, and advanced it by his industrious service; retiring from it when the war of 1861 began, to serve his native State and section, and dying, after the strife was over, at the Virginia Military Institute, setting, with Gen. Lee at the neighboring Washington College, the great example of pious submission to the will of God and of labor for the Southern youth. At least one of the successors he has had at the Observatory has been a man not wanting in learning and ability, but an avowed agnostic and unbeliever who has lent the strength of his mind and acquirements to the overthrow of faith in a personal God. I remember that the only time I ever heard and saw Maury (at the University of Virginia in 1855) he drew upon his observation of nature in a striking passage of his address, to confirm the faith of his audience in a God of order,

might, and love. He was an old-fashioned Virginian, full of love of God's creation, and when he died requested that his body might be borne to its resting-place through the famous "Goshen Pass" when the rhododendrons were in bloom.

A few distinguished jurists are among the Hollywood dead. Judge Moore, of Alabama, has a beautiful monument of Tennessee marble near the grave of Dr. Wm. Hoge. A little north of his is the tomb of Judge Lyons, of the Richmond Hustings Court. Elsewhere lies that marvel of legal learning, Wm. Green, LL.D.; and the grave of the late Judge Robert Ould is just by the monument he erected over his first wife's remains, a little way east of Bishop Doggett's. In like manner the grave of Judge R. H. Coleman, of Fredericksburg, is near the monument erected by students of the University to his son, a most promising youth, unfortunately killed by a railroad train at Charlottesville.

War and soldiers are not forgotten in Hollywood, where lie the bodies of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of the men who bled for

the “Lost Cause.” The “Confederate Monument,” a huge pyramid of unhewn stone, partially grown over with ivy and other creepers, towers majestically on the northern side of the old cemetery. It has a Latin inscription, often printed, but seen by few who visit it. The great heroes of the civil war, so far as the South is concerned, sleep at Lexington. But Hollywood holds one whose name will ever be the synonym of chivalric bravery. He fell at the conflict at Yellow Tavern, where, by dint of hammering with a comparative handful upon the vastly superior forces of Sheridan, he compelled that dashing Federal officer to give over a ride into Richmond which was invitingly open before him. It is meet, then, that the body of gallant “Jeb” Stuart should be in keeping of the city he saved and died in saving. A tall column of granite, with simple inscription, tells that he fell at the early age of thirty-one. The words “Lieut.-gen. A. P. Hill” on the flat granite curbing, inside of which he is “alone in his glory,” point to the spot where lies that brave and successful lieutenant of Jackson, on whose dying lips

his name lingered. He was the only general officer who fell in the evacuation of Petersburg; he seemed to prefer to die with the Southern cause. A marble cross is at the head of Gen. R. H. Chilton, for some time Gen. Lee's Adjutant-general. And all over the grounds are small monumental stones beneath which lie the bones of officers of all the lower grades of service, many from the Gulf States. Gen. Pickett's grave is unmarked; it is on "Gettysburg Hill," to the north of the great Confederate pyramid. Among other as yet unmarked graves known to me are those of Maj. John Stewart Walker, who fell at Malvern Hill (one of the best Methodists who ever lived in Richmond, and a man of noblest type), and that true-hearted, brave, and faithful soldier, Maj. Walker's brother-in-law, Col. John M. Otey, the Adjutant-general of Beauregard and Johnston in the West. Few lives have ever had such a record of faithful self-sacrifice and devotion to those he loved as that which ended just two years ago in Col. Otey's death. Sweet as the roses that bloom at his head is the odor of such a life.

No profession is more fully represented in Hollywood than the medical. Faithfully laboring to delay the coming of their patients to its sheltering protection, they have themselves found there, from the impartial sepulcher, a welcome. In old age, in the prime of life, and in youth, these disciples of Esculapius have taken the "medicine" which, like Raleigh's death-ax, is "sharp, but cures all diseases." The love and care of "the poor" is mentioned on some of these doctors' tombs. Happy men! who sweetened the bitter potion of poverty, and who are sadly missed by the humblest and poorest patient. The late Dr. James Bolton is buried beneath one of the prettiest of the Tennessee marble monuments. Near him lies his son, the young engineer, whose life was sacrificed by the caving in of the Chesapeake and Ohio tunnel under Church Hill—an ugly, dark hole that I never go through without a feeling of recoil, and which should never have been constructed.

One notices the great number of columns made of James River granite. This excellent stone, which for building purposes and

paving is finding its way into every part of the Union, is found in abundance on both sides of the river above Richmond and opposite to it. It takes a beautiful polish, and is as durable as "the everlasting hills" out of which it is quarried. Of the scores of monuments made of it, the finest is the Masonic monument to Dr. Dove, Grand Scribe of the Grand Lodge of Virginia for more than forty years. It is very near the canal, and with the smaller but still noble column in memory of James R. Branch (cut off in the prime of life and mid-career by the falling of a bridge in 1869), and the monument of Mr. Larus recently erected, forms a prominent part of the view from all points along the river. Around the monument of their great old Secretary the Masons have buried many of their brethren. Dr. Henkle's wooden head-board, as I have before stated, is here. The Masonic order have rewarded forty years' service with a noble structure; the Church has allowed a true and holy man, who served at her altars for an equal length of time, to slumber for twenty years under the sign of a pine plank!

Of monumental sculpture there are many examples in the tombs of Hollywood, chiefly over the graves of women. One on a man's near President Monroe's is a bowed figure wholly covered with drapery through which the figure is dimly discernible, suggestive of perfect abandonment to grief. Other figures represent angelic pity or consolation. Ferns, lilies, and other flowers are in chiseled abundance, and occasionally there are small recumbent statues. In one place there is a round stone column about ten or twelve feet high, with a flat cap-stone and heraldic shield, unlike any thing else in the cemetery.

As to inscriptions in general, it may be said that very many are brief, names and dates only; some are puerile and inappropriate; a few are in German (one of a youth near Dr. Duncan's grave contains the first verse of Count Zinzendorf's hymn, so well translated by John Wesley, beginning, "Jesus, thy blood and righteousness"). One on the tomb of a railroad employé, killed in a collision, is a singular poem of three stanzas, full of metaphors derived from his calling. Those which I read with never-exhausted in-

terest are expressive of Christian faith and hope and resignation. In the Catacombs of Rome, amid the horrors of persecution, the hunted and despised followers of Jesus left on the walls of the gloomy refuge, which was sanctuary and charnel-house in one, the imperishable record of their high faith. On the graves of Anglo-Saxons, the great civilizers of the world, that faith, after eighteen centuries, still utters no uncertain sound. The gospel which "hath brought life and immortality to light" swallows up "death in victory." One of the most perfect of these Christian inscriptions in Hollywood, ingenuous, but not labored, is on the head-stone of Mrs. Susan Morton Hoge, wife of Rev. M. D. Hoge, D.D.: "From a Life of Love, through a Death of Peace, into an Eternity of Glory." On the shaft which marks the resting-place of a young lady is this language: "Her last words, 'My trust is in my Saviour. I die without a doubt or fear.'" What other people besides Christian believers "die without a doubt or fear?" In apathy, in reckless bravado, in stupidity, or with inward trembling or fearful anxiety, men may die who

know not the Lord Jesus. And if in outward calmness or philosophic dignity, yet with what uncertainty and doubt! But the Christians "die well;" old or young, cultured or rude, rich or poor, in prosperity or at the end of crushing adversities and losses, they breathe their life out sweetly who lean their heads on the bosom of Jesus. From the graves of these young and inexperienced believers, little known out of their immediate families, no less than from the tombs of saints like Plumer and Jeter, and Bishops Moore and Doggett, and Drs. Hoge and Duncan, the victorious shout arises, caught up by the millions of Christians who yet remain alive: "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

No. 34.

AN ELOCUTIONARY PULPIT.

OME days ago I was reading the preface of a work, a valuable work in its department of knowledge—“Gymnastics of the Voice,” by Oskar Gutt-mann. In referring to the defective elocution exhibited, most of all in the ministerial profession, the clever author says:

“The remark often heard in this respect, that a pulpit speaker ought only to care for what he says, not how he says it, cannot be made any longer. How can a perfect sermon be brought to a true appreciation without a perfect delivery? Let less stress, therefore, be put on the sinful state of man, and more stress on the sinful neglect of a true æsthetic form and culture, and let there be given a good example in this respect by an artistic training and cultivation of nature’s gifts; for only in this way can the true moral sense in the people be fed and cultivated. Let the people be attracted and accustomed to go to church by the perfection of pulpit oratory.

Let the noble thoughts be clothed in a noble form."

This language is not only a specimen of the notions of many men as to the function of the pulpit, but it is a type of the thoughts in which a considerable class of persons comfort themselves in the utter neglect of worship and attending church. They may admit the intrinsic nobility of the thoughts contained is very much Christian preaching, but they beg to be excused from listening to those which are not "clothed in a noble form" according to a standard quite as high, perhaps, as that of Mr. Guttmann. And as few if any clergymen, by natural gifts and cultivation, attain to this "form," these very particular hearers are content to gather their ideas of morality and religion from books and newspapers, or perhaps the "noble form" of the actors in theaters. With them manner is every thing. The matter may be the voice of God to man on the subjects of greatest importance to man, but it must be treated with contemptuous indifference, not to say received with disgust, unless voice, gesture, modulation, emphasis, combine to constitute

“a noble form” considered from the stand-point of the professor of elocution. Before discussing this unsound view, let me hasten to say how highly I value the gifts of nature for delivery and real cultivation of a high order in elocution. Blessed is that preacher whose voice is like a lute; whose “bodily presence” is not at all “contemptible,” but commanding and attractive; whose utterance and gesticulation are natural, easy, pleasant, impressive; whom it is a pleasure without drawback to hear. As to your actor-like preacher, whose art is not well concealed, whose delivery smacks strongly of affectation, whose voice is artificial and gestures studied, though his articulation be distinct and exact, though his postures be graceful, and his tones graduated to the emotions supposed to be expressed, now by whispering and now by a fierce gnashing of teeth, I prefer, for my part, the awkwardest boy in “the saddle-bags class” of the itinerant seminary. He, at any rate, is simple, earnest, and means all he says; a blunderer, and at times somewhat ridiculously so, he may be, but he is thinking about something else than the effect he is

producing by his manner. Perhaps a great soul of love and faith and eloquence, like Marvin's, is concealed for the time by that boorish manner and that unlovely exterior. What possible objection can be made to Mr. Guttmann's "Let the noble thoughts be clothed in a noble form?" By all means, if possible. Nothing is sacrificed, but much gained, by the attainment of that end.

But when he talks about laying "less stress" on "the sinful state of man;" and that "the true moral sense in the people" can be "fed and cultivated" only by "artistic training and cultivation of nature's gifts" in the preachers, so that "a good example" shall be given "in this respect," and that people can be effectually "attracted and accustomed to go to church by the perfection of pulpit oratory"—to all this I most decidedly object. It is, as I conceive, a complete misunderstanding of the true functions of the ministry, of the real state of the human race, and of the agencies which can be successfully employed to convert and sanctify men. Is it a time when iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold, to lay "less

stress upon the sinful state of man?" Upon what shall we put stress? How ridiculous, to a man in earnest, who really believes man to be sinful and lost, to think of stressing any thing else! And for a teacher of preaching to tell his students that they have heard enough about man's ruin and redemption, and it is time they felt less the importance of that and gave heed to the more necessary theme of their "sinful neglect" to make the right tones and right gestures! And as to "attracting men and accustoming them to go to church," do preachers who excel in elocution always have more hearers? Houses will not hold the people who go to hear Moody, but he is no orator, and I suspect never read a work on delivery and elocution in his life. People overflow the churches where Sam Jones speaks, murdering elocution in every sermon, knowing as little of it as a calf does about the opera. But if there be any thing on which Moody and Sam Jones put stress, it is "the sinful state of man." And as men are sinners, and their sins involve tremendous consequences, it is a theme with powerful fascination after all. There

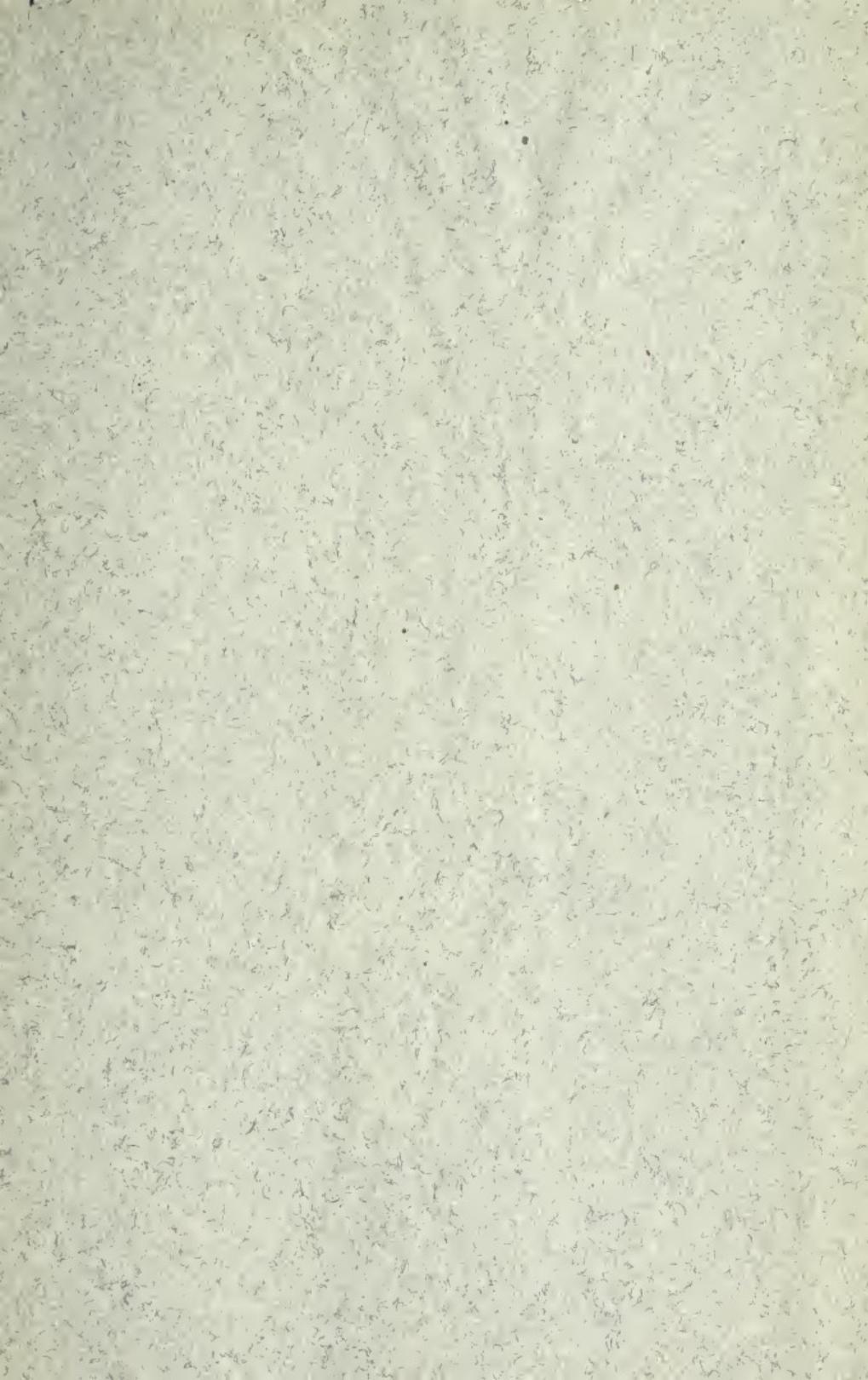
is no other more fascinating, save one, and that is the other and even more approved theme of the two evangelists—namely, the Redeemer and Saviour of sinners. Let these be handled with earnestness, force, faith, and simplicity, with directness and pungency, and men will come to church. Or if they stay away, not all the elocution from the time of Demosthenes to that of Guttman would bring or save them. “The god of this world has blinded the minds” of such men; they may make an occasional excursion to hear some pulpit lecturing to kill the heavy hours of a Sunday, but going or tarrying with any serious intent is not in all their thoughts.

Whether we consider the duty of preachers, or the effect they produce, or the question of acceptableness, every thing is against this theory of laying chief stress on manner and trying to convert the world by “excellency of speech.” Indeed, St. Paul, the greatest of Christian ministers, reminds the Corinthians that when he came to them declaring the testimony of God it was “not with excellency of speech or of wisdom.”

And that he meant that he came without graces of elocution or oratory is very certain, for these had always been much cultivated among the Greeks, and orators and actors abounded with that polished and inquisitive people. But Paul did not, on that account, give up putting stress on the great doctrines of the gospel, but "in weakness and much trembling" he sought the divine power and preached "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." To substitute elocution for that is like trusting in "Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron." Conceding the desirableness of pleasing men with voice and manner, where possible, it is nevertheless all-important to maintain the position that men are not to come to church to be entertained. Drive that idea out of their heads, not by repelling them from the sanctuary by unpleasantry of delivery, eccentricity of manner, and disregard of common sense in speaking, but by presenting the subjects of sin and redemption in such overwhelming contrast to all else, and with such pointed application, that they shall not be able to give a serious thought to the subject of elocution. Men in

battle, exposed to a fire of grape and canister, do not have time to admire the mechanical dexterity and perfection of the apparatus which pours upon them the "hail of death," nor are they in a mood to discuss questions of projectiles and elevation.

THE END.



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